

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL  
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY  
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**THE WORKING PEOPLE OF LOWELL  
LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
MARY BLEWETT/MARTHA MAYO**

**INFORMANT: PAUL PAGE & DONNA MAILLOUX**

**INTERVIEWER: MARY BLEWETT**

**DATE: AUGUST 6, 1986**

**M = MARY**

**P = PAUL**

**D = DONNA**

**Tape 86.28**

M: This is an interview being conducted with Donna Mailloux from National Park Service, and Paul Page at the University of Lowell, South Campus Library, on August the 6th, 1986. The purpose of the interview is to explore, (pauses for a few seconds) a definition of ethnicity for third generation, French Canadian people. And I suppose the classic way to begin is to have each of you give a biographical sketch of your families, so that we can situate you in the community. Go ahead Donna.

D: Okay. Well my grandparents from both sides came down from Quebec along the St. Lawrence River Valley area, St. Pascal and St. Croix I believe.

P: Saint ... Three Rivers?

D: Not in that area, more towards the upper side. Anyway, it was along the St. Lawrence River Valley. They came down around 1909, one set.

M: 1919?

D: 1909, (M: 09) to Lawrence, Mass. They were farmers up in Canada, on my father's side. On my mother's side, they were farmers also, but my mother's father had a skill. He was a carpenter up in Canada also. So when they came down from Lawrence, they came down separately. They were not married yet. They, both grandparents, both sides had met while they were in Lawrence and married, but they were from the same general area in Canada. And this is how they met each other. And when they came to Lawrence they found work in the mills, from Lawrence, the Lowell mills. And my mother's father eventually went back to his craft as a carpenter, and ended up working for a, another

carpenter, and by trade. And of course my father's parents continued to work in the mill. And my father's father worked in a paper box factory in Lawrence.

M: Can I ask you just a few clarifying questions? Do you have any sense of what kind of farmer, what kind of farming that they were into in Quebec?

D: No I don't. I think just general farming, and raising pigs.

M: Umhm.

D: And you know, just sustaining themselves type of thing.

M: So a general purpose farm, plus one cash crop.

D: Exactly.

M: Okay. And when they were mill workers, do you know the sorts of jobs that they did?

D: They worked as weavers spinners. And again, that's in the woolen mills of Lawrence. And my grandfather on my father's side eventually worked in a paper box factory.

M: Umhm.

D: And my mother's father went back to his trade as a carpenter.

M: How was he able to do that?

D: He found the work. I mean there was, there was a need for it. And he found work with this construction company that needed carpenters. And he and his brothers had come down, two of his brothers came with him initially, and they enticed the others to come down. And his oldest sister came down to take care of the five brothers who were here. And (--)

M: Does that mean cooking, keeping house for them?

D: Cooking and keeping house for them.

M: Umhm.

D: And so you know, my grandfather met my grandmother, they married. But that's basically, he just found work. There was available work, carpentry at the time, in the 1920's.

M: Did they go back to Quebec frequently, or?

D: To visit, not as often as I've heard other people go, but they did go you know, I think once a year in the summertime.

M: Strictly in the summer, like a vacation?

D: Yah, really more like a vacation and to visit. And my father's side went back a little bit more than my mother's side to visit, but never to stay for long periods of time. It would only be like one or two weeks at most.

M: What about the pattern on your mother's side, was it virtually the same or?

D: Pretty much the same, you know.

M: Umhm.

D: They came here because there were friends in the hometown that they knew. And the others came along because there were relatives you know, that were here. But it's because they knew someone, and they heard there were jobs in Lawrence. That's why they came.

M: Was there any particular mill that they worked at in Lawrence?

D: The Pacific?

M: The Pacific Mill.

D: Mill, yah.

M: Was there a sense of getting jobs for people in the Pacific Mill?

D: That I don't know. I, I'm not sure, I'm not. But I, you know, I do know that my grandmother worked there for many years as a weaver. And in the late 1930's she ran about thirty looms. And I, you know, my father tells stories of him bringing her to work. She worked the second shift to make more money. And on a weekend night when he'd want to go roller skating at Canobie Lake, he'd have to leave while he was roller skating, and go pick up my grandmother. And when she'd get out by eleven (giggles) he'd take her home, and then he'd go back and be with his buddies, you know. So he had the job of taking her to and from the mills, which was important.

M: Wages were higher in the second shift?

D: Yes.

M: Is that because it was inconvenient for a lot of people, or ?

D: That's the assumption I (--)

M: Yah, yah.

D: I really don't know for sure, but that was the assumption why I always figured the second shift was better.

M: Did your grandmother, once she got married, did she drop out of the work force or what happened?

D: She interestingly enough, I discovered this recently doing some research, when she first came here, she actually ran a small store on Essex Street in Lawrence (M: Hm) with someone else, and ah, it catered to mill workers coming out of the mills, and if they wanted lunch. And when she met my grandfather and got married, she just gave up that business completely, and had a few children. And it was when she would work in between some of the children, you know, she'd work for a little while, and then she'd you know, be pregnant again and she'd stop working. Ah, but when the youngest was a few years old, she went back to work fulltime again. And she ended up having twelve children. So she was quite busy, (laughs) and going back and fourth in between a lot of children. Not all of them lived though.

M: So that her work life was really sporadic (D: Yah, umhm) for awhile.

D: Exactly, you know.

M: Particularly if she stopped work when she got pregnant. She was really [unclear].

D: Right. As the, as the older children were able to take care of the younger ones, she was more able to go back to work here and there, you know. And she also ah, you know, babysat other people's children for awhile. And then I've heard my father say that he was babysat by other people too, while my grandmother was working. So, again I think it was as the need arose. And if she could go back to work, she did. When you have a big family, you need the money.

M: Did (--) How long did she work? Did she work her full adult lifetime?

D: I think, yah, she worked (--) Well she became ill in, in her late fifties. She died fairly young. She was, she was sixty two.

M: Umhm.

D: Complications. In fact, on the same day I was born my grandmother passed away.

M: Hm.

D: And (--)

M: What was her name?

D: Eva, which is my middle name. And Eva Talbot Mailloux, as said in French. And she, my understanding again, I'm not exactly sure, is that she worked up until a few years before she died. And it was because she was ill that she stopped working.

M: And always as a weaver?

D: Always as a weaver to my knowledge, yah.

M: Any sense as how she learned the job?

D: No. That I don't know. I do know she had brothers and sisters who were here, and they were working in the mill. So it might have been that she learned from them, or got into the mill from them, but that I don't know.

M: Do you know, are, were any of them weavers?

D: Yes.

M: They were.

D: Yah.

M: Okay. Okay. Well Paul, let's hear about that. We'll keep the generations parallel for now.

D: Okay.

M: For awhile.

P: Okay. So let's see, my father's father came from, from Quebec naturally, Joliette, where I think is somewhere down the southern part of the St. Lawrence sea way.

M: You've never been there?

P: No, I've never been there, neither has my father, neither has anyone else on his side. Part of the reason is, is the (--) I guess my grandfather was orphaned when he was small, because the farmhouse burned down killing his parents. And he had a sister, his only sister. He was left as an orphan. And he went to live with an uncle. And I guess his uncle was, didn't really want him there, naturally. Well not naturally, but farming wasn't a very good occupation then, and that's why everyone was leaving, leaving Canada. (Laughs) And it was very, very tense. And he used to tell me some, some, some stories, which I was only half conscious of. Well he used to describe what it was like. Later on in his life he became slightly, which is when I knew him, in his seventies and eighties, he

became a little senile. So he used to always repeat his stories. Anyways, and he use to talk about his work and the same repetitive way. [Unclear].

M: On the farm?

P: On the farm. Even though (--) Well I don't remember the exact details. That's the funny... all ... and some of the... he was a sort of a down to earth, earthy sort of guy. So some of the language he would use, that's it, he didn't pick up English very well, but what he picked up was, profanity is basically that's what it seems to me, otherwise he would speak in French. His English was peppered with French and English. So many times I didn't understand what he was saying. That's why I can't present a picture. It's just sort of incoherent to me. (Laughs)

M: Do you have a sense of what they grew? Obviously it was a poor farm, but ah (--)

P: It seems to me that I always remember him talking about horses. And it was somehow that, and cattle, that sort of thing. It wasn't, it wasn't vegetables.

M: He didn't like the animals, was that it?

P: He didn't like the work.

M: The work of the animals.

P: He didn't (--) Just, he didn't like (--) He'd talk about how hot it was, and dirty, and he used to talk something about he use to get beaten or something, but when I was younger it didn't mean anything to me. And he eventually, when I became older, he never, he stopped talking about that sort of stuff. And he started (--) In a sense he probably lost his memory, and he was moving closer and closer to the present, and, but (--)

M: An unhappy life!

P: At least the early, yah, most of the early. He would work as a laborer though all of his life. He came here because he probably, because he never learned English for one thing. He, he must of been kept out of a lot of jobs. And I can't think of any other reason. He never worked in the mills. He worked for dairy, dairy farms at Brox's. (M: umhm) And that, I guess that was his major occupation for his life.

M: So he never really left the farm?

P: No, really he never did. In a way I guess not.

M: Did he know people in Lowell? Did he come to people in Lowell?

P: He, he came to Lowell. He has no relatives here. My father even says now, I don't know why he came to Lowell of all places. You see what I mean? And my mother says it

was a stupid thing for him to do, because he can't, he doesn't understand why he came to Lowell. And then I don't know if he got married in Canada, or married someone here, but my sense is that they married in Canada. He married my grandmother there, and I, I (--) He came over when he was about twenty, and oh, oh I remember now. I know why he came over. He was a draft dodger. They were (--) It was 1917, or whenever Canada, he wanted to (--) I was just talking to my aunt, and she was the one that told me that. I didn't even know. She said that that's why he left Canada, to get out from going to the war. And ah, why he came to Lowell? Well it still isn't clear, but (--)

M: But he never hooked into this family, friends situation that got Donna's people right in middle.

P: Oh no, no. It's (--) I don't know what it is. I often use to think it was just a particularly French trait to be not group-minded like, not taking care of other people in your own ethnic group. I know that interviewing people, that's not true now, but in our family it was always that way, we were always somewhat isolated kind of people. And he was till his death. It's sort of independent. It's like a senseless independence. [Laughs] I never knew how else, just you know, to be set apart, just of the sake of being considered independent sort of thing. But he never did have any social networks, and even my own father doesn't have that background to him. And most of my, most of his brothers and sisters don't have that kind of attitude either. It's mainly a family oriented group, but not like the way my mother's side is family oriented. It's more closed, very closed, and I don't know, not close knit; almost parasitic in a sense the way, basically because of this inability to seem to go outside for themselves.

M: What was his name?

P: His name was Joseph Page. He just died last year at eighty-eight or something. My grandmother died when she was seventy two. Her name was, Fredeleine Biron.

M: I didn't catch the first name.

P: Fredeleine.

M: Fredeleine?

P: It's like Frederick, except it's Fredeleine. It's not Lyne, it's Leine. So it's Fred-E-Leine, L E I, or Leine. Fredeleine. Fredeleine. But (--)

M: What do you know about her?

P: I don't know much about her either, except that her brother owned a liquor store. And I guess that's what really pulled the family through, through all the years, through the depression. And my fathers used to say how they would hunt pigeons in the backyard for food. They'd make little traps, little boxes. He even, he even showed me what he did here at home. Well we have squirrels. He built the same thing again, and to trap them.

[Laughs] Not to eat in this case, but to get, get rid of them. But ah, they didn't have an easy life. She was very quiet as far as I can tell, but I guess my mother tells me she was very stern when she was younger. So (--)

M: What did that mean?

P: What it means is, if you knew my relatives, well if you knew my father, and brothers and sisters, they're all pretty quite reserved, and sort of fearful, you know. And I think it might have had something to do with the way they were brought up. They were brought up in a very religious home. The mother was a strict disciplinary, and she prescribed, or determined what each child would do practically every hour of the day. So when my, so my father again, when he looks at today's generation (--) I agree with him though, but he sees the kind of freedom and the parents not caring about what their children do, or giving them too much free reign, you can see how it comes from his background. They use to say the rosary I guess, for two hours every night after supper. They wouldn't go out at all after supper anyways. (Laughs) And that was what his whole childhood was like, until he went into the navy.

M: And then your grandmother [led the devotions], is that it? She was the one who organized those things?

P: Yes, yah, yah. And I guess my grandfather didn't really believe in that too much, but I don't know much more about that. But I know later in life, after she died, he didn't go to church or anything anymore. And (--)

M: Did she ever work?

P: No, no, because they had eight children, and that was (--) They're (--) I don't know how to describe it. She just didn't work. I know she didn't. I just know she didn't.

M: Well, certainly raising eight children, that's a lot of work.

P: Yah, one child died because of (--) I guess they use to sell Fig Newtons in boxes, cardboard boxes, and they wouldn't be individually wrapped, or anything, or wrapped in groups. So apparently some disease or fungus had attacked the fig part of the cookie, and one of their children died, because of apparently (M: Food poisoning) from that, food poisoning. And that left sort of a scar on the family.

M: Was she a very energetic woman?

P: I don't know. At the end of her life I didn't know anything. I didn't really like her. Even though she was very nice, she was handicapped when I was young, and I think children have something about handicapped people. Well my mother is handicapped now. And I know the little kids in our neighborhood all look at her as a kind of an object of curiosity, and don't really want to talk to them, or say anything to them, because I don't know what the reasoning is, but I had that same feeling when I was younger. So I never,



she sort of frightened me basically, even though she wasn't frightening anymore.  
[Laughs] She had diabetes I guess, most of her life. I think it was juvenile type, onset, but it wasn't under control until later in life.

M: Probably undiagnosed.

P: Undiagnosed, right, yes. So I don't know.

M: Now just let me comment a little bit on this. Eight children, a wife who did not work, and a laborer, that's a tough way to support your family.

P: Yes. The kids never (--) And then the kids certainly (--) None of them (--) She didn't know English, and my grandfather was the one who knew English better than anyone, but because of that, my parents, my father even, his English is fairly heavily broken. And I think even my English is broken in many ways, because I think that it's the set of examples, the examples that the parents set that influences the way you verbalize yourself later on in life. This is sort of different, but if I was born into a, in an English, or English you know, family, Yankee family, I'd probably have a different linguistic footprint or fingerprint than someone else, than I do now. And I think that that's one way of marking off people as to their class, and their ethnic background for the rest of their lives, but that's something else.

M: That's fine.

P: But I just think it's an interesting observation, how you don't ever escape. There's no sense. There's no way of really (--) Even if you go to school all, you know, if you go to school and try and perfect, that's the idea the immigrants had I think, of going to school, is that it could breed out of you the worst parts of your ethnicity, and make you fit into the system better. But it's those patterns of language that become almost instinctive within you, that are created as a child.

M: Do you agree?

D: I think I agree with that Mary, because I can name instances where it's happened to me. Where I feel that my talk has a little French Canadian twang to it, and how I say things. In fact, even going to college right here at this university, I was embarrassed by one of the professor's with class, which I'll never forget, because I had written a paper on a subject and the professor read it, you know, as he read all of the papers. And in passing out the papers and the grades, he made a comment to me as he called my name to come and get the paper. And he says, I could tell you're French Canadian Miss, in your writing. (M: Laughs) And he then proceeded to (--) I had misspelled a word on the page, and even to this day I have trouble with this word, but I had to say indepth. And the th sound, the "th" is a real difficult sound for French people to say.

P: My father especially, he does it to the day.

D: I had spelled it dept on the paper, (P: exactly) because I would say indept, cause I don't say the h.

P: Exactly!

D: So he, (giggles) he was not in anyway trying to embarrass me, he was just making a comment and a joke. But I was embarrassed by it. And because I was trying to overcome that, because going to a French Canadian grammar school, and then going to a public high school was hard, because of this very reason. I had certain phrases that I said, certain ways of saying things that were not acceptable to other people, or they'd look at me twice and say, "What do you mean?" [Giggles] And I thought I was talking perfectly fine, but obviously I was not. And when I went to college I made a conscious effort to avoid that, but yet in some cases it would come out, and people would notice it. But I think it's just, again, as Paul said, a way that you're brought up and the way that your parents talk to you, or your grandparents talk to you. And I mean now it's not something that, in fact I'm proud that I have a little French Canadian twang [Laughs], but at the time it was a little hard though, because you were trying to overcome it.

M: How do you perceive the dominant culture that the professor represented? Is there anyway to identify that as being something other than French Canadian?

D: Yah, definitely other than French Canadian, this was something that I was trying to strive for.

M: Was it kind of establishment?

D: Yah, exactly. Well, I don't know if I want to use establishment. That word from, you know, it's the 60s, has a meaning, (M: Yah) but just the whole college atmosphere you were trying to fit into, and be part of, and be successful at, you know, this is what he represented to me. And to have him make a comment like that meant that I was not fitting in as I should, you know?

M: You were being recognized. [Laughs]

D: I was being recognized.

M: You weren't [passing]. [Laughs]

D: Right. I got a wonderful grade on the paper, but it was just (--)

M: Unforgettable!

D: Yah, one of those things. And I think that you know, today as I said, it doesn't bother me, but I think it's a growing pain that many children of immigrants, or grandchildren of immigrants experience. And until you feel comfortable with yourself, you're going to have to go through that growing pain, and that little tang of, I guess it's embarrassment. I

don't know if that's a good word, somewhat feeling embarrassing, embarrassment that you have.

M: Having attention called to your difference?

D: Right, because of the difference.

P: I was thinking (--)

D: Today as I said, you know that's why I like to throw out these phrases once in awhile to get reactions. (Laughs) You know, at the time.

M: Could you give me an example?

D: Well I think a lot of... we say things a little bit differently, or we drop endings. I mean it's not only a straight New England accent, you drop [unclear].

P: My father with the TH, he says like, especially only with this word, tousand.

M: Umhm

P: TOU, like TH. And there's that, that's in his background. When there's TH, the H gets dropped.

D: The H gets dropped, or we add an H. Give me some ham with some heggs, instead of ham and eggs. You know, you add an H when you shouldn't, [Laughs] but everyone knows what you mean, or because of the French Romance Language you know, the classic you know, throw me down the stairs my shoes. I mean I wouldn't say that in English, but you know, my grandparents would say something like that, and put the verb and you known, the noun in the wrong place. Reverse them.

P: I, I have problems with that today.

D: And occasionally I will (P: I [unclear] French on that) come out with something without even thinking about it, and it comes out that way. And I say, "I can't believe I just said that," but I did, you know. And it's a reversal of the verb form.

P: A verb forms are a problem. I have that, I've had that here.

D: And I think it's just the French language, or any you know, Italian, Spanish are that way, it's really only English that it's not. [Laughs] And yet (--)

M: Let's explore this business about language since we're on to it. How bilingual are either of you? And when did you learn French, and when did you learn English?

D: I'm not bilingual, and I wish that I was. But when I was young I was able to understand French a little more, but as (--) When my grandparents passed away, my parents no longer spoke French. So when I was young and I was hearing the French, but as I got older I didn't hear it anymore, so I lost it. But my two oldest brothers only spoke French until there were six or seven. And when they went to school, the nuns at the time said to my mother, "You know, you have to acclimate these kids and Americanize them." This would be in the 1950's then. And we have books at home that are in French and English that my brothers use to study with, and they learned the English. Because my grandparents were around, they always just spoke French to my grandparents. So my parents, because they were told by the nuns, which of course, and I think this is another subject we could get into. You know the role of the church, and the priest, and what the priest and the nuns say is what you do. (M: Really) Ah, we're told by the nuns that you know, your boys have to learn English, so ah, my mother and father consciously stopped talking French to us, you know, to the younger ones in the family. And subsequently you know, with the combination of my grandparents no longer being around, as I got older I've lost you know, that ability. I can read a little bit of French, but to speak, no.

M: Have you ever been to Quebec Province?

D: Not to visit the homestead. I've been there on one occasion. We saw some other cousins of my father, but it was you know, just over the line, and we didn't go back, although my parents have gone back. You know in my lifetime my parents have gone on vacation up to Canada on two occasions for a few days.

M: What about family friends and relatives, are there French speakers?

D: Yes, in my parents' generation they still do. When I was young I mean when my parents didn't want us to know what they were talking about, they would speak French, you know. That was a way of not letting the kids know what you were talking about, (laughs) you know. And, but in my mother's and father's generation they still speak French, and my older cousins speak, can speak French. You have to understand my mother and father were both towards the younger sides of their families. So their older brothers and sisters, though the children, the older children of the older brothers and sisters speak French also.

M: So you see it as a collection of the influence of the grandparents diminishing in a sense?

D: In many ways, right, yah, I do. And the need to be Americanized, and to lose that distinction.

M: Do you sense though, the conscious policy of the church at some point to (--)

D: I think so, but yet again we still had French classes in school. You know I think that they wanted to retain it, but they wanted us to be bilingual, you know? And they wanted you to know enough English to get by and almost know English very well. But yet when

I think of it now, you know the English we were being taught was not proper English, and I think that's probably why we speak sometimes as we do. (Laughs) Because the nuns who were teaching us were speaking with, in many ways, the broken English, or the tainted English, so they're teaching us the same way. So if you're taught under those conditions that's what you learned. You know? And I think that that was recognized at some point, and certainly as the you know, by the 1960's when you had a lot of social upheaval, and many ways, with a lot of things, it's still going on today of course. Um, there was that need to get rid of this ethnic burden at the time. And I really believe it was considered a burden, and, you know to be, fit right into the main stream. And of course today we've gone back the other way I think. But if I may comment on a difference between Lawrence and Lowell, you know, growing up in Lawrence I found out when I came to Lowell, came to school (--)

**Tape I, Side A ends**

**Tape I, Side B begins**

D: I think that the French Canadians in Lowell maintain their culture longer and in a stronger way than we did in Lawrence.

M: Do you have any sense why that's the case?

D: It might have been because of the neighborhoods, the situation in the neighborhoods. I don't really know. You know in Lawrence we had, South Lawrence was considered the Little Canada version. But then again I think of it now, our South Lawrence section was more so like Pawtucketville, and the little Canada version was really downtown Lawrence, you know? And here in Lowell you had downtown Little Canada, and right across in Pawtucketville, but in Lawrence there was a major separation, you know, one side of the city to the other. But here in Lowell they were closer, and I think it just, you know, the two communities were closer. And then we (--)

M: How were they separated in South Lawrence, by another group or by?

D: Yah, across the river, the city itself. And then you had the river. And then you had to come through an Irish section, (laughs) and then come to what was the next, you know, little upper French Canadian section of Lawrence. So you had that distinction, and I think that's why.

M: Paul, okay, same thing.

P: Well I have, I don't speak French that well, and I don't think I ever will, but I can understand it, and I can read it, and I can actually write it. And mainly that's because of my own work at it, not because my mother relatives. My mother never taught me. However, my mother's sister raised her four kids to speak French before they spoke English. And this was, this was in, the first one was born in sixty-eight. So she had her last one in seventy-six. They all spoke French before they spoke English. And that's also probably because her husband was a French Professor, and he even teaches here at night.

Then he taught, they lived in France for awhile. So they were very, very keen on making sure their kids spoke French. And but because of that, it actually influenced, made me, well made me look bad in a sense, because now everyone in the family can speak French, even my brother can speak French. He picked it up because basically everyone else in the family spoke French. Even though my mother never formally taught anyone to speak it, she, well he picked it up better than I did. Anyways, well now I actually know it better he does, because I worked at it, (laughs) and he just let it slide. But then we use to go to Canada every summer for a few years when I was younger, or at least every two years. And my relatives always expected me to come back knowing a little bit more French than I did the year before. So that sort of made me interested in knowing it, and I'm still interested in knowing it, but I just think it's a hopeless cause. I hide behind the, I don't know, the language theorist who say that language acquisitions stop after a certain age. I'm pretty convinced it does. Even though we can talk about some philosophy professors here who make it their lives to constantly learn new languages, and up through your middle age years, I don't know how they do it. But anyways, I went to a French grade school and we spoke, we were supposed to speak French there too, but we didn't really. I went to St. Jeanne D'Arc, across the river here, and then I went to Central Catholic High School. That was another private type of school. Well, you know, it was just Catholic, it was just religious. And then after that, well I went to another religious (--) I went to a religious college for, to become, well apparently to become a priest, which wasn't exactly going to happen. And after that I left that and I went into the navy. And then after I left the navy I came back to the University of Lowell. And so that's what brings me here. But like I say, most of my relatives didn't speak English. Even on my mother's side, though they were more, I don't know, socially conscious than my father's side. My mother's side is actually, you know, the stronger, more continuous part of my family background. Um, they were, apparently they were teachers in Canada, and they lived in Drummondville, which is part of (--)

M: Did we fail to explore your mother's (--)

P: My mother's side, yah.

M: Okay, let's do it now.

P: And they have a more interesting history. I think, I was just trying to think of his name before, but there's a church in Montreal, I think it's Brother, Brother Andre or something. Frere Andre. Brother Andre. And he's something, I guess he, I don't know if he's been sainted or if he's been, I forgot what. There's, you know, there's two categories before, beatified, whether he's been beatified or sainted, but in any event he has a church in his honor, because of cures that he supposedly made. And he's a relative of my grandmother. So that (--) So her side of the family seems to have more interest. They were the ones we would go visit in Canada. And they'd come down here when there were funerals. We'd go up there when there were funerals, or weddings, that sort of thing.

M: Was that the nature of the visit, [unclear] family occasions?

P: Pretty much yes, yah. Not for vacations, that was never our idea. And well what else about them? Well like I say, they were teachers not farmers. They never worked in the mills here either. They worked in some sort of factories. Well my grandfather worked for the railroad. My great uncle worked, he was a mechanic, but he wasn't a mill worker as far as I know. I mean he worked in a mill I guess, maybe you'd call him a mill worker, but he wasn't working with textiles, let's put it that way. It was some sort, it was always some sort of heavy equipment they were making. Some sort of equipment they were making.

M: They were actually making machinery?

P: Right, rather than fixing machinery, [that kind of thing].

M: Did he work at the Machine Shop, the Lowell Machine Shop?

P: Maybe that was it. I don't remember. I don't know the name of it. But all I know is that he was a machinist and they made equipment. Because I didn't, the reason I know is because I did go there a couple of times to pick him up.

M: Is this on Dutton Street?

P: See I don't know. I was very young then, and I do remember it being something like a mill building, but we use to go at night, because he worked not quite the second shift. He always used to get out when it was dark. I only went probably two or three times. Well we use to go to the ball game with him, and that's (--) So that's how I got to know him. He use to like to go to ball games, and I hated sports. (Laughs) I still do, but anyways. Well, that's one of the things when I interview the people now, and they talk about how important sports are for the French people. And even though I can see that in the older French people now, the more I think of it, but, and I can see it amongst some of my peers who are more influenced, who are more backwards in a sense. To me that's, to me it's being like backwards, but that's just my prejudice, because I attached so much to former era. Even before I interviewed mill workers I always had the sense that playing sports was like, it was a way of becoming socially mobile. Now, that's how I rationalize it now, but then I just had the sense that it's not appropriate for today's day and age to be, to be just playing sports for the fun of it, you know, or whatever.

M: Let me just explore one thing, you did say that you went to French schools, private Church Schools, and I'm amazed that you escaped learning the language in these schools.

P: It was probably too late. It was probably, they probably lost hold of their grip over things by that time.

M: Or you resisted. (Laughs)

P: No, because see, the funny thing is I wasn't, I was [unclear] pure French. Even though it was a French school, by that time private schools had become anything that wasn't public, and it was called private was idolized.

M: I see, I see. Who were the other groups in these schools?

P: Well there were Irish, and not too many. I've got to say that the French were pretty predominant, but there were Irish. There was, like in my neighborhood there were two Irish families out of like let's say, ten houses definitely.

M: But we're talking about the school population.

P: School, but there were a lot of kids. My neighborhood developed after World War II, that further part of Pawtucketville towards Dracut. And so all of those houses really had kids who were of school age by 1970, especially if they had three, three children let's say, had one and you know. So that's how there was one Irish, then there was a Polish person, and most of the others, French, mostly the rest are French. But none of them knew. Only, I only can remember (--) It was interesting. There was only one, one other person who knew French, and he was like, how can I put it? Well he was always the more intelligent in the class, and I was sort of like, I was within let's say, the top five. There were a couple of girls who knew French. Anyways the point was, if you knew French, you were set apart from the others as being automatically more intelligent than the rest. And you did better just by that, by virtue of that separation.

M: What about the teachers?

P: The teachers were discriminated towards people who knew French for one thing.

M: No, no, I meant did they themselves, were they bilingual, and were they French in background?

P: Well some of them weren't. Most of the older nuns, they were all nuns at this time, except when you got into the eighth, seventh or eighth grade. And once you got into seventh or eighth grade, even the nuns didn't know how to speak French, because at that level they had younger nuns, those would be more knowledgeable about current events.

M: Who had been to school most recently.

P: Yah, right, more recently. (Laughs) I remember they didn't know French. I mean, and I remember students feeling superior to them because of that. (Laughs) So it was pretty heavily driven by French, even though they didn't actually teach it that much, or very well. And no one was expected to know French, it was a hidden status symbol. (Laughs)

M: Rewarded by the teachers.

P: Right. But it was all implicit. None of it was obvious.



M: What was your experience Donna?

D: I think in some ways similar to Paul's. Some of the kids in our school knew French. And it was a French Canadian parochial school, peppered with some Irish, but basically French Canadian. And the older nuns spoke French, and they liked it if some of us younger kids could speak French. But I never found it to be a bad thing you know, that was used against me, because I couldn't speak French, but it was nice if you could. You could see the pleasure on some of the older nuns faces, you know. But again, as Paul said, when you get in the seventh or eighth grade we had the younger nuns, which was quite a good thing to have, but, and they were a little bit more hip, you know, as they say. (Laughs)

P: Yup, exactly.

D: That I can assume made some major changes. And I think a lot of that had to do with us becoming, you know, getting rid of this baggage, you know, and working into the American mainstream as I said earlier. But (--)

M: Are these the people that were promoted in the bilingualism?

D: No, I think that they were promoting that you, you know, that it wasn't that important we have French classes. In fact, by the time I was in the sixth grade we stopped having French classes, and my older brothers had had school where half of it was in French and half was in English. By the time I got in the fifth and sixth grade that was no longer the case. We had one French lesson class, and it was the language. It wasn't all lessons were conducted in French, as what had happened with my brothers, it was, you were learning the language. And by the seventh and eighth grade we, that wasn't as important. In fact they were offering Spanish to us, or anything else, which was really quite something. [Laughs] And my eighth grade nun at the time had said, you know, when it was time for girls to decide where they were going to go to high school, our parochial high school was having financial difficulties at that time, as were many Catholic schools in the late sixties and seventies. And this nun, a young nun said to my mother, she said, you know you live in Andover, and Donna is much too shy and she should go, take advantage of going to Andover Public High School, and not come to our high school. Because one, it's in danger of closing, and two, it would be better for her. So that was kind of a surprising thing for the nun to say to my mother, that I should think of not going to a Catholic girls' high school, but go onto (--). And again, it was showing that sense of getting out. And of course my mother was like, if you're not going to go to the high school here, I want you to go to the Presentation of Mary High School, (laughs) which I didn't want to go to, you know. But I ended up going to Andover High School, which was in many ways traumatic, because I didn't realize there were other people besides French Canadian Catholics. And here I go to this high school that has everyone, you know? [Laughs] Jewish? What is that? You know, all kinds of people from various backgrounds. So it was eye opening for me to go to a public high school. And I think it was a wise move on the nun, to tell my mother to do that.

M: What do you remember about that experience?

D: Well, second day of school I had a tough experience there too. I had a young man who was ah, decided he was going to make fun of... there was like one other French Canadian person in my whole class I realized after awhile. [Laughs] And having an unusual name, they said ... they realized I was French Canadian. And this kid who was of Italian decent, had lived in the South Lawrence area for awhile amongst the French Canadians. And I guess his father had made fun of French Canadians quite often. So when I'd come to school, and here he sees you know, a French Canadian here and this and that, well he decided to play a joke on me. You know, he tipped my desk over, you know? And this was you know, very, very difficult. Here I am adjusting to a school, and I have this kid making fun of me. Well needless to say, four years later I got him back, and I won't bore you with the story, but you know I did eventually get him. (All laugh)

M: Do I want to hear it?

D: And I think.... I have to tell you that it was from that day on that I decided that I was going to be very proud of being French Canadian. I mean he really spurned this in me from making fun of me that day. And ah (--)

M: So he took your desk and turned (--)

D: And he turned it over, you know, (M: Yah) just when I was going to sit in it, you know? And it was very you know.

M: Did you almost fall?

D: I almost fell, and it was in a class with a very strict teacher you know. And so I ended up getting in trouble when I didn't do anything. But I'll tell you the story. Four years later (laughs) as a senior, when we were in, it was the last week of school and you know, we were being (--) I guess you know, this was supposed to be good, that we were having a coed gym class. This was like a big thing. (Both laugh) I was there with my friend. We could do what we wanted to as far as any sport we wanted to play. So we decided we were going to play paddle ball. Well in the meantime I hear this gentleman Frank coming down the stairs with his friend, and they had been having a tennis tournament going on all spring. And being kind of a rich Andover kid, they were betting a hundred dollars each on this game. Well it come down to the last game they were tied. So I hear them coming down the stairs and Frank's saying how he forgot his tennis racket, and he can't believe it, and blah, blah, blah. And I looked over in the bin where the tennis rackets are and there's three tennis rackets, two good ones and one bad one. So I said to my friend, let's play tennis. (Mary giggles) So we take the two good tennis rackets, and there's the one bad one. And Frank says, "Donna please, I'll give you twenty five dollars for this racket." [Laughing] And he's begging me. And I said, "No." Because all I could think of was the day he turned my desk over, you know? Oh he was pleading, and pleading, you know. Of course the other kid was laughing hysterically

about it, you know, his friend who he's got the tennis bet on. So we go out on the tennis court and they're playing and we're on one court, and they're in the other. And every time Frank would hit the ball, it'd go bang. (Laughs) And he was swearing up and down at me. And I said, "Frank, do you remember four years ago?" He says, "What are you talking about," because he doesn't remember. I said, "Sure you remember." And I just named it. And his face goes (--) And I says, "Well you'll never forget it now," and I walked away. And he lost, he lost the bet, you know. And I just said, well it took me about four years to get him back, but I did. But I also have to thank him, because he really spurned this French Canadian pride in me that was in many always you know, hidden in some ways. So because he made fun of me being French Canadian, I didn't put up with it. Then I became way more sensitive about it, you know. So, but that's my story.

M: And your friends at Andover High School, what sorts of people were they?

D: Well I'll tell yah, I never really fit in too well, you know? I would have casual friends there, but not... Only when I became a senior would I say that you know, that I had some good friends there. And their background was you know, Irish Catholic, all Catholic background; because I maintained my grammar school friends, even though I went to Andover High School. I maintained my friends from Sacred Heart in Lawrence, because I didn't fit in, in many ways. I had trouble. I think I had the benefit of where my father owned a business, a family business that we worked with him, worked with my parents. Then I worked with my parents and saw how hard they worked, and I never understood why 90 percent of the kids in the Andover High School were constantly trying to get back at their parents. I mean you would always hear kids talking about, oh yah, you know this and that, and my father said no, blah, blah, blah, blah. I never had this rebellious relationship with my parents, you know? I'm waiting for it to happen. It hasn't happened in my life. I don't think it will, but maybe it might come out one day. But in high school a lot of kids were at odds with their parents, I just wasn't. And I never understood that, and it was difficult for me. Also, you know, school vacations, most kids at Andover High would come back with their tans, and they had gone here and gone there. They'd say, "What did you do?" And I'd say, "Well I worked at my dad's store," you know, for the week. (Laughs) And they'd say, "Oh, you work, you actually work." I'd say, "Yah, I work everyday after school." And a lot of kids just didn't. So it was a very different lifestyle than what I was use to, and where I was coming from. And I think, and now I [unclear] why it took me until I was a senior to really put that behind me and fit in with the [unclear].

M: What happened when you were a senior?

D: I think I just opened up a little more, and realized that these people aren't going to change. That's the way they are. They are not going to relate to me unless I relate to them. And that's what happened.

M: But there's still a sense when you came to University of Lowell, that (D: Right, that I was) that you really can't do it all over again.

D: Exactly. I made a conscious effort when I came to college that I was not going to waste in my mind three years waiting for people to be as I was, and that was not going to happen. And I made a conscious effort to open up more.

M: And what was the experience like?

D: Oh it was much, much better for me, because I, you know, I had to make that effort and it worked. And you know, I feel I'm a lucky person that I can say I have two best friends. And one of my best friends I met in college here, and you know, another I met at work. But you know, it was from that, that I was able to develop relationships which I think are more long lasting. But it was an effort. And I think a lot of it had to do with feeling that you had to prove yourself. I was constantly hearing that French Canadians were dumb; that French Canadians talked funny; that French Canadians were only interested in playing cards; and you know, didn't have a mind to do anything other than work at a machine. And you know, I think a lot of it is that a lot of French Canadians have skills, and they're craftsmen, and they're not so much on the professional side, they're more on the craftsmen side. So you have this connotation and it hit me even more so when I came to Lowell. People would say something to me like, say if someone's talking and they say a couple of swears, and they say, pardon my French [Laughs]. And I say, what do you mean by that, pardon my French? Why do you pick French as, you know? And you know, to me I started looking at that as a negative thing, you know. And things like that would come across to me. And even later on when I worked in the city Library here in Lowell, I worked in the Special Collections room, and I have these two women coming in who are doing genealogy, two very well-to-do Irish Catholic ladies. And I was working for them and they were very pleased. And you know, after the second day we'd come in, they asked me my name. And as soon as I told them my name, their faces dropped and they just, they left. [Laughs]. You know, obviously, what am I, a French Canadian doing in a city library in Lowell? [Laughs] I mean, it was like I couldn't believe it. And again, you know, there's that negativeness, you know.

P: See, I never had that problem with my name.

D: Well maybe I'm, maybe because I'm sensitive, because Frank Paulazotti did a number on me. But you know, I don't know, but ever since that time I've had this feeling.

P: Do you ever notice, one thing I've come to dislike about French people is that they're always the people who are willing to do work without like questioning anything. That's always the sense I've had. They do (--) They're workers. And I remember when I was younger someone said, "The French were meant to be second class citizens, because that's what they enjoyed being." And when I see the way the French people have lived in New England, they've all been basically second class people. (M: Umhm) And what ever city you're in, they maybe a majority, they're still like a minority politically. And it's this idea that all they want to do is work, go home, go to church, go to bed, go to work, you know, that (--) They're almost the prototype of people who work without question, and do things just because they have to do it, and that's it. I have to do it, there's no (--)

D: We're not taught to make waves, or to think on our own. I think I agree with that Paul.

P: Exactly, exactly, absolutely. I get it all the time with my grandparents, when they see the back, the major I have. Even though they don't know anything about the subjects, they'll, they'll instantly (--) Not even on the idea (--) It's not so much what kind of job will you get, it's more like it's really useless anyways to be thinking about these things. And a lot of people I met, a lot of French people (--) And anyways, you know, it's a sense that there is a sort of uselessness to life to begin with, so why spend this kind of effort when you can just (--)

D: Well I think that, you know, a lot had to with, unless you know, you can see an end product, that you made something, or a skill, it was difficult for a lot of people to understand any other type of work, professional work or researcher. I don't believe French Canadians were encouraged to go to school beyond high school, as were a lot of other ethnic groups. You were taught to go out and get a job and you know, develop a skill, and if you went to college that was really something.

P: You weren't really abnormal. No actually, I think so. I think that's what it comes down to.

(D & P are speaking at once.

D: Well I wouldn't say abnormal. I would say unusual that you went to college. In my family, let's see, on my father's side I was the forth person that I'm aware of to go to college.

M: And the first girl?

D: And the second girl, but my cousin Bernice was radical because she went to college. [Laughs] She was a radical and she wanted to be a school teacher. Like she took up being a Nuclear Physicist or something, you know, that would be even harder for them to understand, but I mean that was unusual. My brothers were encouraged to go to college, and so was I in my own family, and I think my parents did. But when I look at (--) It's funny, a few years ago my grammar school friends, we get together once or twice a year, and they were talking about their graduating class from French Catholic High School in Lawrence. There was only about twenty-five, thirty girls in the graduating class, and over half of them, none of them went to college. And those that did go to college are, you know, most of them went and then got married, and didn't continue in that field. There's only like three or four that did, and are continuing in a career. So I think that gives you an indication right there, that it was not, at least in women, encouraged, and that's not that long ago, mid 1970's, to go on to college and to have a career. And you know, you were suppose tom, you know, get a kind of accepted job, at whatever it would be you know, even if it meant working in a department store. You were working and that was good.

M: Before marriage?

D: Before marriage. And after marriage, well, in many ways, although today I think the economy dictates it, but in many ways I think it was up to the husband whether you worked or not. What the husband said is what you did. So.

M: You have previously discussed with me your experience in your family business in terms of skills learned. What did you learn? What sort of work did you do?

D: Well the work I did, well I started in my father's store when I was about five. [Laughs] Sunday mornings after we went to church and after my father cooked us a big breakfast, and we listened to French and Polka music. Don't ask my why [Laughs] my father liked Polka music. We would go down to the store and restock the store, because Saturday was a big day. So all us kids would restock the store. My brothers would be there. I would go (--) My older brother would go around and write the product down and the number that was needed. Then I carried this piece of paper down to my younger brothers down in the basement where the stock was, and we'd through in seven bottles of ketchup and eight, you know, whatever, and carry them upstairs. And then I would put them on the shelves you know, and we would do this. So I started about age five. And Saturdays I would, when I was seven or eight, I would walk down to the store. We didn't live too far from the store, maybe a half mile, and bring my father his lunch, just as many mill workers' children did. [Laughs] I'll say like Ted Larter in that film that we produced at the park, if I wanted to see my father I had to go to the store, and she said, "I had to go to the mill." (Laughs) But that's basically the way it was. And I worked restocking and helping my father on Saturdays. And at age eight or nine, I was actually working the cash register and bagging groceries. And ten or eleven I was working on Saturdays. And twelve, you know.

**TAPE I, SIDE B ENDS**  
**TAPE II, SIDE A BEGINS**

M: This is an interview with Donna Mailloux and Paul Page on August 6, 1986. And we're asking Donna about the kind of wages that she earned when she was working at her family store.

D: Okay, as I said, I was quite young when I started to work there. And I think (--) And we did not get an allowance at home. So that's important to note. We would work at the store. And my father would be very generous with us if we asked for money, you know, if you wanted to go out and do this and that, because we, because we didn't get an allowance and because we did work at the store, he you know, we could ask my parents for money and get money. When I started to get paid I think I was about twelve years old, and I made two dollars a week. And then in high school, as a junior, I started to get seven dollars a week, which is a big jump. [Laughs] And then in college (--)

M: And how many hours did this represent? (D & M: both chuckle)

D: Well this is (--) For seven dollars a week, I must have been working, oh, fourteen to fifteen hours, you know, at that time. And then when I was in college, in order to help pay for my college education, you know, then it was a much more reasonable thing. I was making about forty dollars a week, you know, in college. But you know, while we were young like I say, we did not get an allowance, and because we did work at the store, my father was always, my father still is a very generous man. And you know like on Sundays if we went to Hampton Beach or something, my father would be fantastic you know. You know, Ski Ball, I think French Canadians love to play Ski Ball. [Laughs] I always did. My father would pull out a roll of nickels and we would you know, and we could play till our hearts content. So there wasn't limits in that way, because I think we worked. So my wages, albeit small at times, were, it was, you know, I had benefits in the other way. So, and as far as some of the skills I learned, you know, at the store, I think a lot, dealing with the variety of people. And you know, we'd have some very fussy customers, and we'd have some not so fussy customers. Knowing when people were in bad moods and good moods. And ah, just being able to talk with people, and remembering, you know, well how's your mother feeling this week? Or how's your wife and this sort of thing. And again, just learning all about that. And you know, whispering you know, oh no, here comes so and so, [Laughs] get ready for this, you know, and that sort of stuff. And so I think it brought us as a family together you know, in that way. And then I learned skills, ordering products, receiving products, signing off on things, checking when you know, if the bread man came in that you know, he brought in you know, twenty loaves of bread, and making sure the count was right, and that sort of stuff. And then of course ah, moving my way up to butchering, because my father is a butcher, and learning what that was like. And you know, to this day I can still cut chicken breasts, and skin and bone them if you want, or cut you some steaks, or pork chops, or whatever. And ah, I was over some friend's house you know, awhile back, and they had a whole chicken breast and they didn't want it to be whole. And they were upset that they forgot to ask their butcher to cut it. And I said, "No problem, give me a knife." I cut it in half, removed the center bone piece. And then they decided they wanted to have it skinned and boned. So I did that. So you know, I can still do all of those things.

M: This is the shy, young woman who (--) [Chuckles]

D: Well yah, I think I'm still very shy. I think as Paul was getting into, French Canadians were taught to be subservient I think, especially the women. My father, I mean to this day, I mean you know, we have customers come in and you bend over backwards in the store, you know? And then I think of it sometimes and I say, "Why are we doing this?" [Laughs] But you know as kids we would carry their groceries out to the car, and we would do things to make people happy. Make people happy with you and that you were doing things right. And you just didn't upset things, you know? If someone did something, well, they didn't really mean it, or it's okay, we'll get over it. And you didn't challenge people. That's, you know, my family, and I've seen it in a lot of families. But then in other cases I've seen French Canadian families where you had a tremendous pride about them. And I think that had to do with the class structure. Where

you came from in Canada, and what you came from in Canada. And if you were more well-to-do in Canada, well you should be treated more well-to-do here. And you know, where my family was basically farmers up in Canada, although my mother's family had skills as a carpenter, my grandfather was a carpenter, and his family, my mother's family was considered more well-to-do than my father's family, because my mother's family, the father was a carpenter. And in my father's family they worked in the mills. There was that connotation, but you were taught to just kind of except things as they are, and not get upset. And just go along and go to work, get up in the morning, go to work and come home, and be very close with your family, your immediate family, and also with your relatives. But I think because we had such large families that, you know, your immediate family would suffice as being close. Although we still have on my mother's side a family reunion every year. And I mean you have upwards of three hundred people. We have to rent a recreational park in Andover to have this outing, and we have it every year. And they all come, and we have a great time. And so you still have that sense of closeness, but yet around the holidays and stuff is the immediate family that you know, you stick with.

M: Is there a recognition, or an implicit recognition that there is, that societies organize different hierarchies and that's it? You know about them, (D: Umhm) and you defer and make your way?

D: Yah, well I think so. I mean, if you look just at, in relation to my Dad's store, just with our customers, when the doctor's wife came in we made sure that she was happy, you know, and she got her service. And I think we were that way with all of our customers, but it was more so with the doctor's wife, and the lawyer's wife. And if the rectory called, well my gosh! You get that order down there now! [Laughs] You know, that sort of thing. There was that feeling, yes.

M: Do you want to comment on that?

P: Well I just (--) Well I can't (--) Well I think you're right though. And when you think of some of the French schools and anthropology, and the functionalist school, I think [unclear], Levi Strauss, or Levy Strauss, and [name unclear] were both French, and they have a functionalist meaning. There's a strict hierarchy, the society, and every group knows its place. And that its place has been [unclear] before its own existence, and you simply have to fit in if you want society to operate, function. It's functionalist.

M: And the fatalism. I think you make reference to a certain fatalistic views that some of the Canadians have.

P: We're like peasants basically. I think the French people are peasants; peasantry of the American peasantry. Whereas at least the Blacks have the recognition of being called underclass, we're not even recognized as being anything. [Laughs] It's just another ethnic group, but it's like we're off into our own class. We're not even a part of this ethnic group, or identity type.



D: I think in many ways you're right Paul, but they're also in this group of French Canadians in this country that are very proud of their culture, and they're more (--)

P: [Unclear] To me that's, I know what you mean. My uncle, like I was saying, is (--) I don't, I don't, some people don't (--) There are a group of people in this city who make let's say, pretensions of being the holders of the flame, of the French culture, and so they go out of their way to be involved in some of the activities throughout New England, from New Hampshire to Maine mainly, and then to Maine, mainly. Well New Hampshire to Maine, and then Massachusetts. And these people are like self appointed prophets who have decided to oversee French culture the same way in that in France that there's an institute to maintain the purity of the French Language. Well here there's that same kind of fundamentalism in the French community. And these people have placed themselves as being the eyes and ears of God among the French people. [Laughs] That's how I interpret that.

M: But aren't they professionals? I mean...

D: That's what I mean. I mean to make a generalization that you know, everyone is subservient I think is a bit much. There is a group of people that certainly are professional and have made it and struggled, but I think as the majority of people, majority of working people were taught not to make waves and to adjust. I'm not sure why.

M: How are they taught? Where are they taught? When are they taught?

D: Well they're just taught at home that you don't, you know (--) Rather than face conflict, you avoid it. Not only in the work place, you know, if you've got a problem, if there's another job, get another job, you know. Strikes! I mean even in our interviews we've done we see countless how many French Canadians, when there's a strike going on in the city, whether it's in the thirties or forties, or whatever, they just leave the mill and go somewhere else. They don't deal with the strike. Things, facing family problems as far as health, my mother's was classic. If I don't think about it, it's not there you know, it'll go away. "But Ma, you have to go to the doctor's for that." You know, she won't you know, it will go away. And they don't like to have anything that kind of upsets the routine of the apple cart in many ways. They like to lead a very simple day to day life that's not too, too traumatic to handle. And when you throw in these other things, it causes problems. I'm not saying they don't adjust. I think it's good that they, you know, that this happens once in awhile, but they don't deal with it as quickly as maybe other people do.

M: This sense of a space where there's relatively little conflict in the family, or whatever, is that a sense of there's some comfort and coziness, and fulfillment, and happiness, and warmth, is that what makes the type [organization] satisfied?

D: I think so in the experiences that I have had, but yet I think my experiences in many ways are unusual, because I did work with my parents. Yet I can name you other

instances where I know close knit families, and just like that, but you know there would be conflicts. My family just didn't have a lot of conflicts. I think we're just too easy going, we don't have too many conflicts, but I'm sure that they are other people that have.

P: Well I'm close to my parents, but other than that, even my brother isn't so much anymore. He's, like maybe he's more Americanized, I don't know, but he has, he's (--) We were never a very close family to begin with for a lot of reasons, but we were always tied more to my mother's side of the family. And what happened is in the past few years things we feel (--) Well when my mother got ill, in a sense I didn't feel any obligations to be a part of her side of the family. And I'm not that much of a family (--) I'm a, I'm like a home person, a home boy, okay, and there are other people there in a sense. Then I'm civil to those people who are in the home with me. Now, I'm actually extending that to how I behave on the outside in general, okay. So I'm more of a home body. So if I'm in the Navy, and I'm living on a base, I go out of my way to be livable with other people who are sharing the same apartment that I'm with. And so in my family I think it's sort of the same idea, although we were never that close. My mother had her job, she had her career. Well mainly as she got older she lost her health. I'm going off the top, but as she lost her health, she actually clung more tenaciously to her career and, which I admire more than, I'm glad she did. So that way I don't feel guilty in anyway that she stayed home to take care of me or something like that. So that I pretty much had to be on my own since I was, since at least high school. I made my own lunches. I came home there was no one there. Often times I made her supper, not so much my father. My father went out and bought his own food. He would eat supper. In other words, we weren't the kind of family that sat together, and ate together. However there was a lot of connection with her family and her grandmother, her sister and my cousins. But now my point, my brother got married he didn't invite anyone to the wedding except the very closest, his parents, her parents, their friends. That was it. [Laughs] And mainly because my grandmother had (--) See I didn't know this too much, I know it more now, but my brother's first girlfriend, when he had a couple of girlfriends, my grandmother would ask him is she's French. And if she wasn't, well eventually, eventually she wouldn't even talk to my brother anymore, because he just didn't care whether he was going out with French girls or not. So when he got married to, to an English, basically an English family, he couldn't invite her to the wedding really, he didn't think he could. He didn't like her hot handedness, and that's how he sees it. It's like she's some sort of, in his eyes, a matriarch in the family who intrudes on family decisions and has to be part of everything. To me she isn't like that. On the other hand I really didn't know her that well. I hardly know them. As close as we are, I hardly know my grandparents. I knew my grandparents on my father's side much better. My father always used to visit him. I liked him because he was more earthy than the rest. I've really enjoyed him a lot more than like my mother's parents who were more, actually more intellectual and almost more confused about life. It seems like the more they thought about it, the more difficulties they had. And I still like my Aunt, but recently when my grandfather died, I was at the wedding, and I was (--) ) I know what French weddings are like. I mean French, not a wedding, French funeral. I know what they are like from being an altar boy. I use to serve at these funerals. They're just really over bearing and morose. And I just didn't want to be a part of that. And (--)

M: Could you give me an example of the atmosphere?

P: Depressing. It's very depressing. Very formal for one thing, strict formalities, everything is very formal and then that's within the mass itself.

M: And what exactly does that mean? Can you just give me an example, formal verses informal?

P: Well my (--) I haven't, like I said, I never seen non-French funerals, but.

D: I think it's just that there is so much somber. Although I think it's changed a bit today Paul. You know when I was young, I mean, people were crying and you know, and (--)

M: Open grief?

D: Open grief.

P: Oh no, not that I remember.

D: Not at the wake, but you know, in the church, you know. And well I can't say that, at the wake too. I mean I've seen it. It's just it would be, if you went to a wake you were very quiet.

P: Yah, that's basically it. If you cried, you cried quietly.

D: Yah, you weren't [unclear]. You didn't talk to anybody. The only people that talked were the ones in the back room. My experiences going to a non-French wake for the first time was quite something. I went to an Irish Catholic wake, you know, one of my best friend's grandmother passed away. And I thought I was walking into a party. And it wasn't that the family was not grieving or anything, it's just that it was a whole different attitude that you know, okay, this one has passed on, and you know, we have to except this, but they were not like walking around not speaking, and this and that. You know in fact when I walked in I was just taken aback. I says, "This can't be the right place," you know. And I didn't know what to do, because when I've ever gone to a French wake it was very, very setup. You signed your name, you stopped at the casket and you said a prayer, and the family would be waiting there. And you went through the ritual of saying how sorry you were, and then you were quiet. And you sat down and you said more prayers, and then maybe you'd get up and talk to somebody. You know, or this whispering would be going on. When I went to this wake, like I said, I couldn't distinguish where the family members were. They certainly weren't by the casket. I didn't know what to do. It was very awkward. And finally my friend came and realized I was just looking so lost, and took my through and said okay, you know. But I was like taken aback from the difference. It just was, it was not as much pressure, but it was pressure on me, because I didn't know how to deal with it. But on the family it seemed (-) And it's just an unusual thing. And as Paul was saying, I think it's just that it's so

setup, and the funeral is very precise. And so you know, you just, you're sad and you don't show any sort of natural emotion, you know. And if you want to smile or talk to someone, well you better be out in the back somewhere. Don't show that gaiety to the family members. Don't let them see that, you know? And that was the sense, you know? I don't think that it's like this now. I mean, I mean I don't (--) It still is to some degree, but I think it's gotten better. It doesn't (--) Maybe I'm just older, I don't know. I mean as a kid it's probably more intense, you know, as far as your reactions.

P: I'm not a kid. I'm not a kid now. It's really very bad. It was, but that's just the way my mother's side of the family is. They're very (--) Actually, even though my grandmother on my father's side was suppose to be stern, to me they were the most carefree. Even to me she was carefree, even though I didn't know anything about her. That's partly because she couldn't speak English, and she was pretty sick when I knew her, but otherwise she was always cheerful. Whereas, if I go to my grandma's house, don't touch this, sit here, don't move around. I used to love (--) As a kid I use to love to explore things, and that's (--) I always used to, well my mother had the same mind set as my grandmother. She thought I was sort of, not a nuisance, but I was just to explore, adventuresome. And ah, that's what I always, I always used to run away from home symbolically, just getting away. See my mother had set up boundaries where I could not walk outside; like I couldn't go past, in this case, Riverside Street, Gilmore Street, University Ave and Old Meadow Road. My grandmother lived on Old Meadow Road, and off of University Ave. my Aunt lived. And I had, most of my friends were like outside of this boundary, most of my school friends. So I always had to play with my neighbors. My neighbors actually didn't, most of them didn't go to St. Jeanne D'Arc. They went to public schools. Even though they were French, they weren't either as rich as we were, I don't know what the reasons were, but they didn't go to (--) Actually that was mainly the consideration of cost I guess, is what determined whether people would go. And so they weren't really my friends. They were sports, they would be sports people. They were French. They loved to play sports. I hated playing sports. Most of my friends weren't French, they were different ethnic groups. And so I never felt (--) My friends were Polish, Irish and, and I had one French friend, and just because he was really atypical anyway.

M: What sorts of things did you do when you didn't play sports with your French Canadian friends?

P: I use to like playing games. We use to like playing games.

M: What sort of games?

P: Well with my (--) All right, this is the way to look at it. My Irish friends, I'd play (--) He used to like to play battle games like, well it use to be called [name unclear]. That was one of the names of the games board. German, h was like this German, well not German, but he was into military campaigns and reliving them, and playing them. Then with this Polish person, his name is Koziol, Kenneth Koziol, we used to (--) We used to just (--) His father was a woodworker and we use to watch his father do

woodworking. He had a bunny rabbit that I remembered. With him I use to (--) Well he had a lot of girls that lived around his house. So when I'd go to his house that's when I'd feel like playing like tag or something, or hide and seek, whereas, in my neighborhood the guys weren't doing that sort of thing. They were all, let's go, let's go play. I had a field in my backyard. They'd play baseball at my backyard. And that irritated me even more, because I didn't want to play, yet they're using my back yard to play ball in. And my father wouldn't do anything. So that's why, the way my house is now, it's all (--) I had a lot of trees and shrubs. I have this intense need for privacy. A lot of it is a reaction to this, because my father likes sports and he wanted me to play sports. Sure, I'd play sports. I have another friend who I use to go over when I felt like playing sports, but I could never run. I was asthmatic for one thing. I never could run as fast as they could. And through the early part of my childhood I had a lot of ear problems, a lot of earaches, and those were (--) And I used to get them very much in the summertime with humidity. And another cause was getting water. Anytime, basically water was the key driver. Whenever I'd get water in my ears I'd get an earache. I used to get them for a period almost every two weeks. And that went on for at least actively for one summer. That ruined that summer. And previous summers I had them on and off. So earaches at a young age are just like, ordinarily like torture. So I wouldn't go outside and play. And I'd just stay inside the house and read mainly. But I wasn't much of a reader, because my parents never bought anything, never bought new books, like new (--) So I used to (--) I don't remember what I read, but I use to really hate reading, but that's what I did because there was nothing else to do. I didn't watch too much TV, and they never bought magazines. I use to tell them, "Buy magazines," or buy (--) I didn't like newspapers, because when you're small reading a newspaper isn't easy to do. So I always remembered I always use to look at my father reading the newspaper and saying, "I wish I could do that," but it was so difficult to read. I remember I use to put it down on the floor and kneel down, and then kneel. I used to have to kneel down onto the paper to see the upper edge, to read the upper story. And I hated doing that, because I had this, I was sort of like slightly into neatness. I used to hate, I hate things that are wrinkled. Even with paper today, I don't like paper that's wrinkled. My notebook, that's an old notebook, but I go out of my way to make sure the edges don't get frayed or things like that.

D: I think we were taught that in school, the nuns. I think French Canadians are taught to be neat and orderly. You don't, you know, cause too much. Again, you don't make waves. You fit into these nice little packages. And if you (--) You know, I mean, you must have been terrible Paul [M&D: Both chuckle], I can see where you must have caused problems if you were adventurous. [M&D: Both laugh]

P: And they used to like me in a sense, because I was different for that reason. I was sort of like an oddity (D: Yah) in a way. Like maybe like the way Truman Capote, or [name unclear], or Andy Warhol, or any of these pop culture people. They're like sort of fixtures that you've come to tolerate.

M: Okay. I'd like to have you both, as you like, comment on these values that we're beginning to established about the French Canadian culture, and French Canadian people,

that they are fatalistic, [ordinated], and practical, and austere, and into discipline and soft discipline.

D: I think those are good, you know, ways of describing a good number of French Canadians. I mean even just growing up, I'm very close with my family, I still am today, but we're not, we don't exhibit that closeness. I mean like I don't go home and kiss my parents when I see them, or so on and so on. And I think that when I see other friends of mine and their families, you know, they're very showy in their affection, and we were never taught that. That was, "You don't do that," you know?

M: Not kissing cousins [unclear].

D: No, no. And I don't (--) You know when you're young, and your kids and stuff, but as you get older you realized that was not something that you did, you know? [Chuckles]

P: Yah, little kids can do it.

D: Yah, little kids can do it, but when you reach this magical certain age, don't ask me what age, you know you shouldn't do it anymore. We just kind of [unclear].

M: Is this also a parental kiss at night before you go to bed, or does that (--)

D: No that (--) Well I still most often kiss my father good night.

M: Yah.

D: Yah, but I mean I'm talking about if relatives come over, and running, and hugging, and kissing, we don't do that you know?

P: If you walk into a house you don't do that either.

D: No.

P: Like at Christmas time someone will be at the other end, "Oh hi!" [Laughs] Like, "Hi, how are you?"

D: Yah, that's it. In fact in my family, with some of my brothers' wives who come from families that are very showing of their affections, they almost have a little difficult time of adjusting to my family. They thought we didn't like them, and that was not the case at all. And until they realized that, you know. In fact a good friend of mine whose father is French Canadian, whose mother is Italian, she would always tell me that she didn't get along well with her grandmother on her father's side, because her father's mother, the French-Canadian grandmother, because she was cold. She always thought she was cold, whereas her Italian grandmother was very loving and hugging and kissing.

M: Umhm.

D: And there was always this separation, and she never felt she was close to her French Canadian grandmother. And I can understand what she means, because I don't think we're showy in our affection in that way.

M: Is emotion ritualized then, through certain times and places and not spontaneous?

D: Boy that's hard to answer. I don't think you can really answer that. I guess you'd have to (--) It would depend on the situation. But I guess for the most part, you know, it seems that it's just special occasions that you would you know, hug and kiss someone.

M: I guess I was thinking of your description that, of course you kissed your father goodnight, but probably never any other time?

D: Right.

M: So that it becomes ritualized.

D: Right. And I hardly ever kissed my mother, which is interesting, and I certainly love my parents equally the same. (M: Umhm) But it's more that the girl with the father, you know. Of course I'm exactly like my father, and so forth and so on, you know. [Chuckles] I think this is that connection. But for instance, my brothers, I have never really kissed my brothers or hugged my brothers other than a special occasion, you know, to say.

M: Where you think it's required?

D: Right.

M: Yah.

P: Hm.

D: You know, like say they graduated, then I'd give them a hug, (M: Hm) but other than you know, if it's their birthday or something, big deal you know, it's not a big enough event. And I think that that was just the way we were taught, you know, that you just don't do that. And that was something when I got older I realized that you know, other families, you know, do these things. (P: Hum) I think it was just the culture again. And (--)

**TAPE II, SIDE A ENDS**  
**TAPE II SIDE B BEGINS**

D: ... seem to take on (--) It's a perception that I have that we take on the problems of the world, you know. (Giggles) Like it's, you know, it upsets me when I see someone walking down the street that really needs some attention from society or something, or if

I watch a movie, you know, as much as it kills me to be crying my eyes out over this movie, I've probably seen it ten times, I still do. And it's just that you know, at a drop of a hat many French Canadian women cry, and there's that emotional thing. But yet when you look at our culture and many of our family ways, we don't seem to express the emotions as well as we should.

M: What about (sexual oppression). Certainly large families, certainly very close knit, affectionate marriages for [unclear]. What can one say about (--)

P: Well I never saw any expression of affection between my parents.

M: You never saw any?

P: I can say practically never. You know, just occasionally, only as I got older, and it seemed strange to me. When I say older, actually just in the past couple of years, because I guess they're getting closer together, but before then. Before then my father was more or less like this old school type of male, and he expected his wife to be there to cook for him. I'll never forget all the fights they had over that. They use to have a lot of fights over that. And my mother simply wouldn't be like that, which was strange to me. I don't know where she ever got her (--). My aunt is more (--). Both of them, both of the women, well my grandmother only had two children, both of them are very independent. And it's always struck me as being [anachronistic], because no one else in the neighborhood was like that. I can always, you know, evaluate that. That's why I often say, most of my neighbors are old French, old-time French people even though they're middle age. They're like throw-backs. I often considered that they've never even developed past their teenage years in a sense, whereas my mother constantly changed. She had (--). Maybe it was (--).

M: For the record, excuse me Paul, what did she do? What was her career?

P: Oh, well she worked as a, in a supermarket mainly. She worked in stores, retailing type things.

M: She was a salesperson?

P: Originally as a cashier, (M: Okay) and then later she became a secretary. And she became a secretary, which was like a career change in a sense for her. After, after the onset of a type of a disease that she still has, they didn't know what it was then, but in a sense she was losing control of her muscles slowly, so a slow muscular degeneration, but even then, that's when she decided that she wanted to change her career after this had started. And mainly it was because I also decided to go to school, to college elsewhere, and I said, you should do something, you know, to take up your time, (M: Umhm) because she didn't like to stay at home doing nothing. So then she started working. That's the first time she started working full-time too, when her health was at its worse.

M: And there was friction with your father over traditional responsibilities?



P: Originally, yah. In the sixties, late sixties, that's when it was worse, but afterwards, afterwards I pretty much, that's when I had to develop my own abilities to take care of myself. Otherwise I'd be used as the excuse for how she's not taking care of her responsibilities. So my father still can't wash clothes for himself. And I was able to do it since I was young. I took care of the yard you know, mowing the lawns. I do all the gardening now. I started doing (--) I do, most of the serious cooking I do. Well my mother would if she could, but she can't, so she'll help me. But actually I don't even need her help, but I pretend that I do, you know, just (--) [Giggles] I know it sounds bad, but she seems to think as though I can't do anything yet, you know, that sort of thing, as if I'm still like her little boy, since I was the youngster once. And I can do, you know, most of the things that anyone else can do, certainly any other woman should be able to do. That's the way I look at it. And ah, that's basically what happened. I had to take her role, because of, because of her own, basically because she couldn't go upstairs for one thing. That certainly bothered her in later years. So I had to do a lot of things where I had to go downstairs. So anyways.

M: Did your parents, were they overly affectionate with each other?

D: Not in a major way, but I do remember you know, some instances, you know. We have pictures at home of my parents, my mother sitting on my father's lap, but to give a basic answer, I would say no. But I think as we've gotten older they are more so, but as youngsters I don't (--) But my father was not home. You'd have to understand, you know, I'd be in bed when my father came home. So it's only when I was older that, you know, I'd be up when he came home. And it was like, I mean, the classic "father knows best" when my father came in the house, "Daddy's home." And all of us kids ran to my father. You know, and he'd pick us all up and kiss us, you know. So you know there was that part of it, you know. And but certainly out in public, no, you know, in the house occasionally.

M: Were sex rolls traditional in your family?

D: Yes. I mean my father can't, doesn't know how to start the washing machine. I think he can cook, he can do dishes, but that's about it. But what's interesting is that my brothers, you know, there's, I have five brothers and me, my brothers were never taught to you know, to cook or to clean, or that sort of stuff. They never did these things. But then again, you'd have to understand that we always worked at the store, and I think that that's you know, something you have to consider. But as my brothers were not, they were brought up in a traditional male role, that you worked, and when you came home, the woman did for you. And but my father never abused that. You know, I mean I've heard people say oh yah, their father would sit there and say, you know, like Archie Bunker you know, "Edith go get me" (--) You know my father never ever abused that. But my brothers, now that most of them are married, they're very different. They do, they work together with their wife in raising the children. And they do a wash, and they do dishes, or they change the baby, and they do these things. A very funny story, a recollection of when I was younger, my father had to change my younger brother because my mother

had gone to mass. And she had not been feeling well, and this was the first time she went to church. And he's watching all of us kids. And my Aunt had taken my mother to church. So my father is quote, "babysitting on a Sunday morning," which is unusual. And I just remember my father being, you know, in the bedroom trying to change my younger brother. And he just put me and my other brother on the table and said, "Wait here." And in the meantime the poor man couldn't handle it. And he kept running in the bathroom, and coming back out, running back in. [Laughing while telling story] He never changed the baby. And my poor mother came home, it was like (--) [M: Unchanged?] She had to laugh. And of course we're there, "Ma, you don't know what Daddy did." You know, we're tattletaling on my father, you know, and he's you know, but he was like, I'll never do that again, you know. And so he, he would attempt when he had to, but he never did otherwise, you know, but that you know, that was very traditional. And again, my brothers and I were raised that way. I did certain things and they did certain things, but today they do both things. You know, but yet, I mean I certainly go out and cut the grass and trim the hedges. And I'll tell you that my mother comes from a family of carpenters. My mother did our whole cellar, remodeling. [Laughs] My father couldn't bang a nail straight for his life. My mother did this wood working, and my mother you know, basically takes care of the yard. My father has never cut the grass. I can't remember when my father cut the grass, either us kids, or my mother, or myself. And I think that way we were different I think because my father was working all the time (M: [unclear] schedule) on a schedule. But my mother says that the reason (--) She also came from a family of mostly boys herself. And when World War II came and they were all in the service, she was expected to pick up where the boys had left off. And in my case, that was that way. I was brought up to fit in to working at the store, as the boys did, because my father counted on us children for, you know, as a work force for help. And there was not a distinction made. My brothers would certainly carry up the heavier bundles and stuff, but basically we all did the same thing. So I think again, my case is an unusual one, with the family business, the store.

M: What kind of responsibility did the family take to teach children about sexuality? Ah, what roles did the schools play? What role did peer groups play?

D: I think (--)

M: If you don't (--) I'm sorry.

D: Peer groups I think were more important. My mother and father never took the time.  
(P: Giggles) My mother (--) No (--)

M: Paul disagrees.

P: No, they never, they never taught us anything

D: Yah. No, no the (--)

P: Some people don't even want it done today. Some people still don't want any mention of advice because (--)

D: I think because that's one of those tabu subjects. See, you know, I have learned from friends, and you know.

M: Well one of the classic points, as I'm sure you know Donna, is the onset of menstruation.

D: I tell you exactly what happened. (M: Yah) I was not prepared for this. My mother never explained anything to me. I was feeling sick. My mother has my aunt come over (giggles), a former nun, to talk to me and explain this to me. And I'm insisting that I'm not going to (--) This isn't happening to me. I'm not going to let this happen to me.

M: Denial. [Giggles]

D: Now understand that at school already several of my friends had already started. And you know they'd be whispering like, "Oh yah, she's..." And I would you know, what do they mean? What is this, you know? And they'd say, you'll know soon enough, right? [Laughs] And it was that feeling, and I was almost fourteen years old. So I started late. So my mother had tried. You know, she's (--) Years later she said to me she tried to talk to me, but she just didn't know how to handle it, because she had never been told by her own mother either.

M: Sure.

D: And it just was something she couldn't deal with. And as far as my brothers, I don't know if my father ever talked to them or not. I don't know. And for me fully understanding things, it was, you know, I had learned it from my friends. And so it was not really, you know, information was not given to us at home.

M: Was your behavior expected to change once you had the onset of menstruation, or were you warned, or threatened, or (--)

D: I don't think so, you know, it was never discussed. I don't think my brothers knew, you know, (M: About you?) about me, yah. That if I was, you know (--)

M: Big secret.

D: Yah, it was a big secret. In fact my mother to this day (Laughing) will not say certain you know, like ... (M: Words) yah, if you want to say Kotex napkins or something, you wouldn't say that. She'd call it the blue box. We have to get the blue box. (Laughing) And that's just how she still to this day. And I find myself you know, I'm going shopping and I write blue box. [M & D: Laughing]

M: Blue box!

D: But you know it was just, it was not discussed. I think that that's probably very typical in French Canadian families though.

P: See I don't know. All I know is that it was never, nothing was ever said to me. And as far as my friends were concerned, I'm sure they didn't learn anything from their parents, I can say that. You know, I don't know what their houses were like, but you just know the kind of information you pick up is from the streets, so your parents wouldn't tell you these things, so.

D: Yah, it was, it was not (--) And as far as school, the nuns, I don't remember other than these implied things. I mean one day when we were in the 7th grade, all the girls had to stay after school. They didn't tell us why, but all the girls had to stay after school. And we're like, oh my God, what did we do? You know, and they had (--) That's you know, (--) And they gave us this lecture about making sure that we sat with our legs closed, like this, as oppose to like this in school, you know? They never explained anything else, they just said that. (M: What else?) As to why you should sit that way? They were implying that the boys were looking at us, (M: Yah) but you know it was never quite said.

P: Or on the other hand, that's just a way woman are supposed to carry themselves, and that men are supposed to carry themselves differently. And then, well, I just thought that was interesting, because you can read it. There are articles here and they've done studies on that, on like motion studies. Seeing how, how do men sit on a railway car, and how woman sit, and then what kind of words are used?

M: But Donna's talking about instructions.

D: Right.

P: Right, well that's (--) I know, that's even more frightening. [Laughs]

D: And then there was the day that we, all the girls had to stay after school and they measured our uniform skirts to make sure they were the right length, because some of the girls had them quite high. That was in the time when mini skirts were coming in. Another little lecture was implied about bending over, and our skirts were too short. So I was the only kid that the nun said, mine was too long. [All laughing] It happened to be the day that I had gotten a new uniform that was going to last me for you know (--)

M: A long duration. [All laugh]

D: Hadn't gotten around yet to fixing it to the appropriate length. So of course that was kind of funny in itself. But I remember standing in the hallway and the nun with the measuring tape, measuring all of our skirts, and then us going in the room and again, this impliedness about being careful around boys.

M: And be in control, (D: yes) and cover yourself up.

D: Yes, umhm. Yah, and you know, it was never (--) When I went to (--)

M: Did you ever know any kids who got pregnant, or had to leave school, or?

D: In high school, yes I did. Well Andover High was a little open, much more open atmosphere, but I would hear these stories you know, coming from the Catholic High Schools, and it was, [whispers] "Oh my God," you know. And it was just really a tabu thing, you know, but yah.

P: I didn't (--) I went to, it was an all boys' school, high school. And then grade school, certainly that wasn't in fashion yet. But I do remember first divorce.

M: I thought boys talked about sex? I'm sorry! [Laughs]

P: Well I mean I don't know of boys being thrown out of school because they were [unclear], or whatever. [All laughing] But I remember the first divorce. That was (--) Well I don't remember much about it, but I just know that that was sort of a tabu subject too, and that family was shunned afterwards. They had (--) Well I always use to see it, they had to leave the area. They left eventually, but I felt they just had too. They were from the Gagnon. So the Gagnons are fairly, sort of powerful. I don't know how powerful they are, but they're prominent as a French family. Gagnon Hardware, the two Gagnon Hardwares. There's a Gagnon priest, Herve Gagnon, the anti-pornography crusade. He was a pastor at St. Jeanne D'Arc. And then there's Paul Gagnon who was like, who was part, who was one of the, like the henchmen to what's his name? Bourgeois, Omer Bourgeois. And he's considered to be, you know, still part of that group of Bourgeois power structure, whatever is left to it. Anyways, she was a Gagnon and she divorced. That was, that didn't look (--) You know, and they're suppose to set an example right, being a prominent family in a sense, and being one of the first French families that I know of, French people getting a divorce.

M: Why were they shunned Paul?

P: Well... well for one thing, you know my mother would say, before I could go to their house, because they had one son. Afterwards I couldn't go to their house. [Laughs] It was (--) It was as simple as that. And their own relatives, I noticed didn't go over there anymore. It's strange. But that's, that's something about, I think about how French people are. It might have been a sign of the times. I guess that would have been about sixty five or so, but it's too bad.

D: Like they weren't fitting into the traditional formation.

P: She wasn't. Especially she wasn't, she was a very, she was, the mother was active for a woman at that time, too active, too independent. I always admired her too. I mean

those (--) That's why I use to like going there, because she was more like my mother, and the other women on the street were, you know, really prehistoric. They still are I think.

M: What do you mean by that?

P: Well they live and work and die for their husbands and their children. And it's so much as you know, making their beds, you know, that sort of thing. I mean I think that's excessive.

D: Nine times out of ten my mother still makes my bed when I'm at home.

P: Well nothing personal. [Laughs]

M: Is that a gesture of service, or order, or?

D: I think so. I think it's the way she's just bee you know. I mean I can wash clothes, I can cook, and I clean, but when I'm at home my mother does all of these things. And when we were growing up my mother just did all those things. And I think it's the French Canadians, they work for the family. The woman works for the family and the husband. And you know, you were expected to do that. I mean there were times I remember, if my mother ... if I was older and my mother started to work at the store when we were older. My mother was always at home when we were young. But where let's say I picked my mother from the store and we came home, my brothers would be there and they'd be waiting to eat. And one has to go out. Now you would think common sense, that he could make himself something, but no, they would wait until Ma got home. And my mother, you know, working all day, and she'd have to cook for them. And that was just understood. You know today it's a little bit different, but this is not long ago you know, and my mother never questioned it. In fact, she would (--) You know, I remember her saying, "Oh, I got to get home, because someone's got to go out," you know. And she would put that on herself to be there and do that. But you know, they would have died if we didn't come home for three days. [Laughing] You know they wouldn't have eaten, because no one was there to feed them. It's just that feeling, you know, but I think that a lot of French Canadian women is for service to the family and the husband, definitely.

M: What's it like to be an altar boy?

P: Well I don't remember it too (--)

M: How did you get recruited?

P: A lot of people would be, a lot of boys were doing it, and so I just decided to. And I sort of, I sort of liked the position of being a priest really. So I thought very early on of doing that. I just liked being up there for some reason, and having (--) It just seemed like (--) I don't know if it was a position of authority, or power, or what, but I guess it probably was one of the few areas where you could, where people who simply didn't fit

into other molds could go into that mold basically. They were looking for anyone. In a sense the priesthood was looking for basically anyone at that time even.

M: So that was a recruiting ground?

P: In a sense, yah, exactly, in a way. A lot of people did it because they could get paid for doing it too. You got paid at weddings, right? You got paid at funerals. You got paid two dollars at funerals, and like five, or ten, or twenty dollars at weddings. So it depends on the people. [Laughs] So funny, because then you'd act differently naturally if you got paid more at one, than another. But you can't act much differently. I mean it's a simple function right, but maybe you'd smile more, or something. You'd be happier. To me it was so funny, but anyway.

D: Paul, if I could, did your parents encourage you to be an altar boy and to go into the priesthood? If I may say before you answer that [P: My parents didn't encourage me on anything] it's just that a lot of French Canadian families, it was considered you know, you know that you were blessed if you had a child who went into the priesthood, or became a nun. And you know, they would often times encourage, and certainly the church encouraged the parents to encouraged their children to do that. And you mentioned something earlier in the interview, where if someone was handicapped or born with a birth defect, that that was looked at in a negative way. And you know, there were many French Canadian families that they would feel that they were being punished by God, because they had a child who was either retarded or whatever. And it was punishment from God that you, you know, that you must have done something to deserve this. And that feeling I think, was around. I think a lot of older French Canadians feel that way.

M: That your faith is a reflection of your [unclear]?

D: My father's store for instance. There are two apartments upstairs. I did not know until three years ago that the lady on the top floor had a daughter living there who was retarded. This woman came in the store all the time. The daughter never goes out of the apartment. It's like a stigma. They look at it as a negative thing, that this, this lady (--)

M: Is this is a visible side of sin?

D: Yah. That you were looked at, you know, that you obviously did something wrong to deserve, you know, that feeling that you got a child like this, or something happened to you. You know every culture has something. It's the Greek with the evil eye, or whatever. I think a lot of French Canadians looked at if you had something happened in the family that it was because somewhere along the line you did something wrong and you were being punished for it. But you know I just wanted to kind of interject that.

P: So what else is (--) Otherwise altar boys were mainly male, and then they opened it up to females when the girls, after the boys didn't want to be a part of altar boys anymore, they were doing that. Then women became altar, they had altar girls. But it was a real

big decision for the church. Not that it, not that it (--) Obviously everyone knew why they were doing it, just as if they ever do have female priest, there's at least one simple side crack that I would make. Men simply don't want to be bothered with it anymore. And you've just seen how the job becomes, as it becomes less, less important, or less functional. Women tend to start. Society says, "Oh now it's time women can be in this now, and it's no longer of any insignificance.

M: Well let's get back to your personal experience (P: Okay) with being an altar boy.

P: Well I did it for quite a few years. I liked it a lot. It helped me because I was always a little self conscious. It helped me become a little less self conscious, but I always was very much afraid of being up there, you know, with the priest and the lights, and everyone looking at me. And it took me an awful long time, and actually I don't think I've still have done it yet, to overcome this fear of being in front of the public like that. Even though when I was at commencement, I did really well, I still can't get over it. For me that was quite frightening you know, to be speaking there like that. So we had it video taped and I did really very well. I can't get over it.

M: Good!

P: It's probably, it had to be the best speech I ever gave. I'm saying I wonder what my speech teacher would say now. [All laughing]

M: As valedictorian of the class of 86, just for the record.

P: Yah. You know, but anyways, that made me happy. So I guess one of the reasons I liked being an altar boy was just to try and overcome the fear of being in public.

M: What were your relations with the priest like?

P: Well different priests were nicer than others. The older priests, some of the older ones were really very friendly. I really liked them a lot. And then some of the younger priests, who are still around now, were just uppity and they still are. Modern day priest are just unbelievable. I won't go into that, but they're no different than anyone else. There's no special qualities about them that make them either more pure, or sanctified than someone else. And I think it's the younger (--) The church, it was different. The church was different then. At least when I was younger I respected the older priest and really admired their opinions, whereas even if they were wrong, I still admired that. Today I just have contempt for most priests.

M: And they were friendly. You made that point about the older priests?

P: Yah, they were very, yah, very friendly to young and to old, and they didn't feel special. They were just like everyone else, except when they were serving mass they were awesome, but otherwise they were really homey and down to earth like. And the



modern priests were over intellectual and rational, and they just, I just don't, you know, it's just not legitimate anymore.

M: Is there a connection between your, the pleasure or the identification that you had with being an altar boy, and your decision to go to the seminary?

P: Well actually for me it was this idea that ah, it had just slight influence on me being an altar boy and going to the seminary. I really thought I just happened to do better in that, in those courses, that line of activity. And it was only after I was there for awhile that I realized, well I might as well just... since I really am only concerned about the courses rather than being a priest, I might as well just study these courses and not make that... there's no connection between studying those courses and being a priest. But originally I thought that that was the only outlet. That if I wanted to study these courses I couldn't do anything else with that. So that's why I did that. Now in this case I would have been a missionary, and I feel better about that than others. I could have gone to Oblate Novitiates here in Massachusetts, in Brighton I guess, but I didn't, or Braintree, I didn't want to do that, because I didn't want to be a Diocesan priest, and I still have a lot of distaste for Diocesan priest. I don't (--) But on the other hand I left the missionary order because I didn't like being in an order with people like that, like being stuck with them the rest of my life. And then also, religious orders have hierarchies themselves. And even though you think you're operating under the same principles, what of charity, love and fair-handedness, upper-handed, being evenhanded, it's not, it's not true. So it's just the (--) The religious life is just a microcosm of what's happening in society at large. So if there are murders, and rapes, and all the rest, well in a sense the same is going on in the seminary, except it's just not in a physical world. It's more [unclear].

M: Now you went to mid-western city. And I'd like to have you comment on what it was like to be a French Canadian from Lowell.

P: Well I loved it. And when I first went there, okay, the seminary was thirty percent Afro-American, Afro-African or Negro. Then the other thirty percent of people were Southeast Asians, and the final thirty were American, or not Americans, whites.

**TAPE II SIDE B ENDS  
TAPE III SIDE A BEGINS**

P: We were saying before about going to a public school. And I was never prepared for the diversity that I was going to get there. I had a black roommate for my first. I never even met blacks here. There are no blacks in Pawtucketville. Even now there aren't very many, and there probably aren't more than four or five. Anyways, so I had black roommates. That disturbed me tremendously. And I still remember it. I felt, why are they doing this to me? Because it really prejudiced my chances I thought, of doing well here. Not because I felt I was being saddled with someone, but it's just that I'm going to have to learn to live with this person on top of going to school, you know. Just like the guy who threw your desk over, it's like saying I'm going to have to handle this and go to school at the same time. Well anyways, I love being out in the mid-west. I'd do anything

to be back there. Maybe it's because it wasn't (--) See, I always said, I like the spatial. I like the way the cities or the towns were laid out, and maybe my like of the spatial dimensions and the open fields, and no one around anywhere. It was like total freedom, and I guess it could be a reaction you know, psychically to the kind of closed atmosphere I found here in Lowell. It's definitely stifling in Lowell. It's not my parents. It's not simply this idea, the child having to get away from the parents. It has nothing to do with that. It has to do with the overall culture is like overbearing, and the things you dislike about it constantly are brought back to you, you know. Everything, and as I do the interview (--)

M: Can you be more specific about that? What do you mean about stifling?

P: Well to me it's this idea, this French, the mentality that I think only the French have of ah ... of like order. There's this sense of order. It's this just so (--) There are people who do this on Monday, and they've been doing this for forty days, forty years, and if you ask them, "Would you like to go out shopping today?" No, today I have to do my laundry. [Giggles] It's like, okay, that you can learn to live with that. But it's when you multiply that, when you realize all of these people are all behaving that way, it's really. And I had other concerns on my mind, like what about all the car pollution, and the automobile pollution? Well these people aren't concerned, because on Mondays they do this. On Tuesdays, they don't have time to be worried about anything else, but their own little closed world and the schedules they developed.

M: What makes the order so important? What makes the schedule [unclear]?

P: The order itself, it's like order itself is compelling. There's a meaningful (--) [M&D speak at once, cannot comprehend] It's not a fear. Maybe, I think it's social. Then there's this other side. The French people seem to have, at least they use to have a strong social control mechanism. At least that's my, it's implicit like. And they expect people to behave a certain way, and if you don't, well then you go into this other cat... other cat... there's another one. Utter is a French ... (D: Utter) It's that TH (D: laughing). But they expect you to go in this other category of you know, being an outsider.

D: It's only a couple of years ago that my mother realized she didn't have to do her wash on Monday morning. It was okay. The world was not going to fall apart, you know, because she had to wait until Tuesday. We had a customer at my father's store who just, you know, was so rigid like that, that you know. We also had one of her daughter-in-laws coming in the store, and the daughter-in-law would complain to us about the mother. And the daughter-in-law was not French. And I tried to explain, "Well this is just the way things are done. Don't take it personally. It's not that your mother-in-law does not want to go shopping with you, or something, it's just that she is so use to doing this at this time everyday, and that's the way you do it." And you don't question it, no one questions these things. And if you do question them, then you're a troublemaker. You know, you're causing trouble. (M: Okay) You're not falling in line.

M: [So obedience is discouraged].

D: And this is why I think the French people are probably looked at, in my opinion, as being you know, good workers, because we would work as the boss wanted us to, because that's how we were told. And you wouldn't, why would you cause trouble and do something different? You know, you would fit in. You know I think we fit very well into the orderliness of the mill. [Laughs] You know, the bell rang, and we went there and we worked. You know, and whether the mill brought that on us, I don't know. I mean, I don't know if French Canadians up in Canada are this way or not. I think it might be an American thing.

P: They are. They are. I can tell you from my relatives, they're worse, even worse there.

M: These are rural people with this sense of compulsion?

P: These are city people. My relatives on my mother's side, they're teachers already, and some teach, and they're like nuns. Well, because they didn't get married, some of the teachers. And so you know how nuns are. It's just that stern characteristic, these are stern civilian nuns.

D: I feel at times that I've had a uniform on all my whole life, you know? I went to school and I wore a uniform. You know I went, for a little while at the high school I wore a uniform for a short time. I come to work now, and I'm wearing a uniform again. And it's like it doesn't upset me, I mean there are other people at work that, God as soon as they're done their tour, or whatever, they take this thing off. It doesn't bother me. It's part of my character that it's okay to have this on, even though for awhile I use to run out of my house so no one would see me with this uniform on. I think it's just, it's easier for me to except wearing a uniform, because I've simply been told that you wear a uniform. Okay, that's fine.

P: I have the exact opposite though, condition. And I think it's that I wasn't like most French people, French views, and I'm still not. So when I read Jack Kerouac, I don't so much idolize him, or anybody, but I do feel like an outsider [unclear].

D: I was going to ask you Paul, what you saw of Jack Kerouac and his writing, because that occurred to me when you were saying the stiflingness ....

P: I agree with his, on the kind of view and how he was isolated and shunned when he came back.

D: But yet he had this closeness with his mother, and it almost, like asking forgiveness of his mother that he went and did this, was the wayward son, and when he came back and had this closeness with his mother.

M: And devotion to his mother.

D: And devotion to his mother. And you know, it's kind of a double standard, you know, double thing that you have feelings (--)

M: And the idealization of his dead brother. (D: Umhm) And the real joy he took in the texture of French Canadian culture in life, (D: umhm) even though he might as well find it stifling in...

D: Well what? Are you proud being a French Canadian?

P: I hate to say it, actually not really, not, [unclear] really, but (--) No, I've come to really dislike the kind of people that French culture develops, really. Ah, speaking about uniforms, I'm in the Navy and when we were in Halifax I was suppose to wear my uniform off the ship. I was the only one. I went to such great extents to try and get out, find a loophole in this. I was using like, I was becoming, well I was using like, I was becoming very legalistic. They said that, well I won't get into it, but the whole point is in many ways I constantly rebel against authority, where someone's telling me that I can't do something, I want to do that. Not so much because they tell me I can't, but because I've already decided that I wanted to do it before you told me I couldn't do it.

D: Umhm.

P: And it's the same, you know, it's just to me that's the way my whole life has been. So when I see the way French people historically have been behaving in this city, or in a group, in a community, and I know that they expect me to behave a certain way, and I refuse to do it. Well there's a lot of freedom in that, and I'm perfectly happy. And if the price I have to pay is to renounce my French Canadian background, then it's not a very great price tag, because I don't place a high value on it. My real value is simply with my family, who created me, and not, not (--) I have no other ties to some ideas, some concept like (--) They, and they know that, and they, and they can live with that. And what I see in the French community is total disillusionment with the way they operated, at least here in Lowell over the past century in a sense. And ah, they know that many of the institutions which they depended upon were false gods, and the social systems they developed around these organizations has fallen as the system, as the organizations themselves fall. Like the church for example, it points out a clear flaw in the way French people think about how society's order you know, from like the top down and everyone. And I think we live in a world where those kinds of structures can't survive. So maybe if the French community wants to change in some ways, to account for the growing professionalism among it's own population, then maybe it will survive. But I don't think it will. Like I think the Greeks and the Jews, and Irish and Italians are all more capable in recognizing and let's say, promoting those people in their ranks who do make achievements that are extraordinary by their own standards. Where as in the French, they're cast aside because of this need to maintain like a status quo. (Laughs) To me they're the worst of everything, everything I might have learned. It's like when I read my books, they talk about the ills of American Society. It's like, oh, these are the French people (laughs). I know I'm exaggerating, but that's basically how I feel. That, and I'm generalizing, because I know there are people in the Irish groups, you know, and

different ethnic groups, who exhibit the same traits as French people do, but I think there's a greater concentration among the French, and less tolerance for difference and (--)

D: And if I may add, I noticed what you're talking about. I noticed that more so in Lowell than in Lawrence. I think in Lawrence it was not as bad as Paul was saying, or you know, as concentrated and orderly as it was in Lowell here. When I came to Lowell, again I would hear these things. French Canadians were considered, you know, second class. Don't admit that you're French Canadian, you know, it'll hold you back you know, and that sort of thing. And I think that it was much more evident in Lowell than in Lawrence for some reason, I don't know why.

M: Well certainly the community in Lowell was larger, was it not?

P: Hm.

M: As you say, it was more compact?

D: Right.

P: Perhaps the social institutions had (--)

D: Just kind of [inbred] itself, you know.

M: Yah.

P: I know the Irish were the second, either the first or second largest ethnic group. And when I was interviewing Elmer Rynne, he said the thing about the French is that they would always vote for the Yankees, even though the Yankees never gave them a share of any power. So here are the French voting republican, and the Irish, though we were very stupid for doing that.

D: You know you had the split in the French community. You had that certain percentage that people in power voting republican, the people that could have organized the working class French to vote in a certain way, yet the working class French were voting Democratic, at least in later years they did.

P: Yah, yah.

D: But you know you're right. We never organized and I'm not sure why. The common story is that well we, people just didn't really care. They didn't look at it as staying here. They could go back to Canada anytime. And they would leave conflict. As I mentioned before, if there was a strike they often times would leave. So you just didn't have this commitment to Lowell that maybe the other groups did. And the French people, I think they need someone to look up to in some ways. I mean there is a group of people, you look up to the professionals in a crowd, but you also try to kind of give yourself an uplift

too. You know, say that, "Well all right. They're better than I am, but we're better than them." You know, (laughs) and that sort of feeling is there. And again it's because you have to put things in categories. I think we're taught to be orderly, and categorize and do that. But um, this sense of this unit that you were talking about Paul, again I just want to emphasize that I noticed it a lot more in Lowell. And whether it was because it's just a time in my life that I was more aware of it, I don't know, but I certainly wasn't aware of it in Lawrence as much as I am here in this city.

P: Well you've seen how some of the French Mill workers, how vindictive they are towards one another?

D: Yah.

P: It happened, and it, and even though that's like one out of ten, let's say you have ten mill workers, five are women, five are men (--)

M: Vindictive did you say?

P: Vindictive. French people have (--) I've never met (--) I mean it seems like they (--)

D: See, they don't like to hear someone else doing better than they are, you know. "Oh yah, he knows how to do that, but I can do it better." Or, you know, "Oh yah, they got a new car, but you know, we're going to get a better one." (P: Yah) There's that competitiveness. There's the sense of order, but there's also a lot of competitiveness.

M: Getting up in the hierarchy.

D: Right, moving up in the hierarchy. So I mean, yes, that is definitely there.

P: So they do it by stepping on one another, and in the process they really just cheapen themselves, lower themselves. I see, I think I see this (--) My neighborhood is classic for that. And so that's why I despise, I despise French people for that reason. I mean it's as much, it's as much as a dislike of my, almost of myself, because it's part of me too, it's the way I behave. I don't like that part of me and I, and I single out what's the source, single out the source as being French.

M: What about middle class as an explanation for that sort of behavior?

P: What do you mean, middles class?

M: People who are interested in owning property, and controlling property, and having conspicuous examples of their earning power, and how much of that is consumerism, and how much that can be blamed on the culture?

P: Well the French, I had the idea that they're actually vindictive towards their own kind. If, if a Greek did that, did some of the things that a Frenchman did, you know,

Frenchman do to one another, I don't, I don't know, somehow it wouldn't be as important in the French mind, as when French people do it to one another. Either they get pleasure out of it, or my father was the one who instilled this in me. He, he always says, "The French just can't depend on one another. They'd rather cut each other's throat than help one another." Unlike the Jews, he would say, and the Greeks who ban together and cooperate.

M: How are all of the other ethnic groups viewed by French Canadians? What about the Greeks?

P: Well I had, I had told (--) My father had always said, okay, I can only, that Greeks are more trustworthy. The Greeks and the French, he seemed to like the Greeks more than anyone else. The Irish were lazy, and the Italians were lazy, and everyone else is lazy you see, not immoral, but lazy. [Whistle] Sorry about that. You see, it's that idea of work again. Everything centers around work, and that's how they categorize people.

D: I think in Lawrence too, the, well the Irish were considered bad, because they make fun of French Canadians, or (--) And the Italians (--)

M: How?

D: How? Well they were just you know, make fun of how we talked, our language; that we weren't smart enough to get into politics. That we weren't smart enough to gain control of a business, or whatever, or the Irish would always have the final say. For instance, at our church, I mean there was this tremendous thing that happened in the 1920s or something, where the French church, our church wanted to put a bell in the tower. But because we were close to Saint Patrick's it was overruled in the city, and they never allowed it, because you know, well those French Canadians, who cares? You know, the city was run by the Irish and that was it. So there was always that feeling where the Irish considered themselves better than the French. So we looked at the Irish as someone to stay away from. Italians, well that was like a whole other ballgame. I mean Italians you didn't go near at all. You know, Italians carry knives and talk funny, and give you the finger, you know, and that sort of stuff. [Laughing] We didn't have a lot of Greeks in Lawrence, and so I don't know, but you know, that was really the feeling, you know.

M: And Jews, what's a Jew.

D: What's a Jew, you know, only when I was older. So that you know, in a way.

P: When I went to the Midwest they thought I was a Jew though. Some people (--) I don't know what it is about French people and Jews that are similar, but that's what they thought. So I don't know. I still don't know what, I don't know what [unclear] to do.

D: Polish people are nice. Polish people are nice. [Laughs]

P: And historically the Polish (--)

M: They're no threat. They're not threat.

D: They're all the same. [M&D: Laughing] That's it.

P: But also, even relations in New York are the same. You know, French and the Poles were always close historically.

M: Yah, that's true.

P: So I used to think that there was some tie there. We were always friendly with the Polish. I know that even in my neighborhood. And I had made that observation like in high school, like I say, well because I hadn't, I hadn't studied [unclear].

M: Well what is in common with the Polish people and French people? What did you like about them?

P: Oh what did I like about them?

D: I really don't know. This is just an assumption on my part, but I think that they're not as, they don't make waves as much, you know, as maybe the Italians, or the Greeks would be a little more outspoken. My sense of the Polish community, it was, it was not as outspoken, and that fit more into the French-Canadian mode.

P: They're underdogs too, underlings.

M: Hard working?

P: They might have been lower than the French Canadians.

D: Oh, you know, I don't know. I mean certainly each ethnic group has you know, different, different classes to it, but you know, my sense is that the Polish were always considered friendly and hardworking, and pretty much in the same mode, maybe that orderliness, and very much close to the church. So that was the common bond. Well the Irish in many cases, yah they went to church, but they just weren't as devoted as we were, you know, that feeling that (--). I mean look at how they have a wake, my goodness! That feeling, you know.

P: How about the drinking and all? Weren't the French very, very keen on Temperance Societies? Wouldn't that be considered and [unclear] anti-Irish manifest, you know manifestation.

M: Do people talk about Irish drinking?

P: Oh, oh yes.



D: Oh, but yet you had the French Social Clubs too. I mean I don't, you know.

P: Yah, but I think, didn't the French actually spearhead the, didn't they have the major Temperance Society in Lowell?

D: That could be Paul, I don't know. Yah.

M: How about Irish Temperance [few words unclear]. [All chuckle]

[Pause]

M: I think one thing we haven't talked about. Your father, you know, your father's occupation?

P: Yah, he's a model maker. In other words, he works with metal, and to shape it into dimensions so that say, a computer part can fit into it, you know, making the outer case. Well what he's worked on, he's worked (--) He's been in different companies. He's worked on the, one of the Apollo Space Projects designing the lunar roamer. And then also the U.S. Navy has a new class of cruisers called the [unclear] Class. But I remember back in like '68, my father telling me that he was working on designing that ship. And I remember seeing pictures of it. That's how (--) I wouldn't have remembered the name. They didn't have a name then, but I do remember the picture of the ship. I said, "Gee, I've never seen a ship like that. Won't that be fantastic!" I remember, I remember (--) Well the reason it was fantastic is, I don't know if you ever saw it, but it, the radar is on the front, is in the front of the ship along the, where the bridge would be, that's the front. You know, there's the bow. Then there's the, the superstructure comes up. All the radars are on the side, on the front here. So you don't have, you don't have need for many, for radar elsewhere in what's called the mass. Instead you just have it right around the superstructure. So it's a very unique looking superstructure. For those days it was very unusual, and for me, I had never seen a warship before. So when I saw this one, it looked really clean, you know, really clean lines. That's the whole, that's, for radar you have to have clean lines so nothing is obstructing. Anyways, so that's some of the things, those were some of the things we did. And now I'm in the Navy myself. So.

M: Yah, I did make that connection.

P: And then he was in the Navy too, and he always used to say he loved it. And when I was small, he used to always sing like Navy songs. Things like, one of his favorite, not Navy songs, but you know, we used to watch McHale's Navy together. And those, that was the only show we used to watch together. So I think it was very funny.

M: I think you were being nudged.

P: Really, because when I left the Seminary, I left eh Seminary in December, in January I actually went to a recruiter, a Navy recruiter. And that December and the whole Fall

Semester, I had no plans of going to the military, none. Actually I didn't even plan on leaving. And when I left, and in December I had no idea I'd go up to the Navy. I've never seen anything like it. That's why a lot of decisions I make are pretty, pretty off the cuff, and somewhat, some ill-advised. [Unclear], but.

M: Or predetermined. [Laughs]

P: So (--)

M: Where did your father learn the skills?

P: That's one of the (--) He learned it on his own I guess, and that made him very bitter. He always used to say, "No one helps you at work." No one ever helped him, and he felt, it was part of his bitterness I guess. And you know, everyone is in competition, and (--) I don't, other than that I don't know many more details. He just learned it on his own through the hard way I guess. He said he had no help from anyone?

M: But did he go to a Trade High School, or?

P: Well, yah, he did, he did go to the University of Lowell actually, for, he was good in math and so.

M: Engineering, or what?

P: They were engineering courses, yah.

M: Yah.

P: And I'm not good in math, and that's one of the things I always (--)

M: Did he go to evening school, or did he [unclear].

P: He went to evening schools, right, in '60, 1960 and '59. Then I was born in '61. Then he stopped. So I guess he went for two years, and he got what you'd call an AA. He has a certificate at home anyways, you know. So as a matter of fact, he almost, he could have taught here at VOKE in there. So I guess it would have been like sheet metal he would have been teaching.

M: Umhm. How does he regard his skills? Obviously there's something that was self-taught.

P: Yah, well he never talked too much about it, but one thing that is funny, is when I, in high school I had to take mechanical, the {ASVAB} Test for the military. I did very well on the mechanical parts, even though I had, you know, on lathes and set-ups and things like that. Well only now do I know more about lathes, but then I didn't know anything. I didn't even know what it was, but I was doing very well on all of this equipment, mainly

because he would talk about it a lot. And he has a workbench at home. So I would, but he doesn't have any major equipment there. So I don't know there I picked this stuff up, except that I knew he talked about it, and I must have learned it that way. And he really, he liked some of his work.

M: [Interrupts] And one of your grandfather's (--) Excuse me, finish what you're saying.

P: Yah, but on my mother's side he was a diesel mechanic. A matter of fact, all my mother's side of the family were mechanical basically, my Uncle Mark as a machinist. He worked as an engine man, or something, whatever, for the B&M. And then another uncle, I don't know what he did. I don't think he did anything like that. He wasn't (--) But other than that, most of the family was sort of mechanical I guess, oriented, except I'm not really. I'm not at all [chuckles], but that's funny.

M: What about social activities that you engage in personally? What sorts of (--) Are they connected at all with your family culture?

D: Well I mentioned the family outing earlier. And I think that a lot of as, I have more nieces and nephews and stuff, the family gets bigger. You know, we have a lot of, you know, there's always a birthday, or something happening. So a good part of my life is spent doing that. And then there's just you know, social activities outside of my family. You know, whether it's you know, like going to Boston, going to theater shows, or shopping, or do a little traveling. I like to go visit museums and historical areas, and stuff like that. So you know, I'll do that, or you know, I'll go to the beach with my friends, and that sort of thing. So I think, you know, when I was young, or the difference when my parents were my age, was that most of their social activities centered around the church you know, say, or amusement park, like Canobie Lake, or something like that. But it was, it was a very restricted activity. You only went to certain places. And I mean you didn't go to a certain part of town, or you didn't, you know, you didn't go here, because that's where the Irish hung out, or something. You didn't do that. And I don't think I have, you know, there's none of that tabu on me. If I want to go to this place, or that place, I mean I go. But I think that's the difference from my parents' generation to my generation.

M: And your best friends, are they French Canadian or Catholic?

D: They're Catholic, but they're not French Canadian. They're Irish and (--) Well actually you know, I have to take that back. They're both half French Canadian. [Laughs] They're Irish and French Canadian, and Portuguese, Italian and French Canadian. So it's kind of an interesting combination. But it's funny, neither one of them will admit the French Canadian part, which is, which is funny. They go through spells about it, but again I think it's the Lowell area. [Laughs] You don't (--)

M: The (--) Obviously your background should be useful to you in your job as [unclear] historian of the Park. How have you found it?

D: Oh, it's very useful in my job, especially for interviewing French Canadians, because I can understand completely what they're saying, and just my own family experience, working in the mill. The situation at the mill was something that you wanted to get out of. You wanted to work out of the mill belt, go to, you know, the children should not work in the mill. The children should go into a trade, not so much professional, you know, as in but a trade, a skill, a craft. And you know, like my father became a grocer, a butcher, and you know, and all of my father's brothers went into some sort of skill, whether it was a mechanic, or whatever, or a mason. My mother's brothers were all carpenters, you know, so you got away from the mills in that, in my parents' generation. And then the children of the generation that my parents are in were kind of varied, although a lot of the boys, my cousins are in skills, still crafts, you know. I think my family is somewhat different. My brother is a plastic engineer, another is a draftsman, and two are truck drivers, they had no interest in school, and that was absolutely fine. And so you got, and another is mechanical engineer. So you know, there is a little bit more.

M: Still practical things.

D: Yah, still very practical.

P: Yah, still the working classes.

D: Going into history for me was very, you know, but see I was going also to be a teacher, so that was okay. But when I didn't want to be a teacher, well that was a little bit odd. [Chuckles] What are you going to do?

M: What drew you to history at the major?

D: I always liked it. I think my seventh grade nun, (P: Blame it all on her) she was an excellent history teacher, and really fascinated me with history. And she was just a very good teacher, and I always loved you know, history from that day on. There was that sense. And then of course where I was, had to defend my French Canadianess, I want (-- )

**Tape III, side A ends**  
**Tape III, side B begins**

P: She was a lot of fun [unclear]. So (--)

M: You were talking about philosophy.

P: Oh, well my own, my own [unclear]. Yah, going into philosophy, people are useless. And my grandmother was over my house yesterday, [M: Laughing] and she said, "Oh, I'm so, I'm so proud." She never, she's never proud of anything I do. She says, "But I'm so proud of your cousin. She's learned how to do bookkeeping, and stenography, or whatnot, whatever it is. It's actually bookkeeping, and you know, filling out ledgers.

And I didn't say anything, but that's, I know exactly where she's, what she's thinking of and where her mind is.

D: That's a useful trade that you see a product from, you know. Sitting around a philosophizing about things, why do you do that? you know. And I think it's just that you're supposed to, it's a work ethic that you work hard work. And you know, books and stuff, well that's only done by priests and nuns, and that sort of thing. And that was always the feeling that I was given along the way. And (--)

M: So the concrete, the practical.

D: Right, very, very practical people.

P: That's why I went into the Navy. That was the only reason. I say it all the time. I can do something practical. I mean why would I make that justification, that qualification? I'm sure most of the world doesn't care if I go into the Navy, but for me it was important that I do something practical. That was, and that was a long time my explanation for why I did it. And now, well now I have no explanation, because I haven't, I don't see any need to find one. But at one time I had to defend myself for doing that, and a lot, they sort of admired me you might say. Well I sort of admired myself too, but afterwards like anyone can do that. It's pretty silly. It was very stupid.

D: But I think for you it was like a big breakthrough from the change that you, you know, a change for you that you were in a certain mode and to just decide to go into the Navy was you know, something that was very different.

P: Yah, it was. I enjoyed it. I still do.

M: So what about your social activities?

P: Well I'd like to start with my family, because when I first came to the university someone, Professor Freedman asked people, "How many of you go out to Boston to the theaters?" And I said, you know, I haven't ever gone, I haven't ever gone to Boston on my own, and my family, like I went twice with my parents to see an Ice Capades Show. Oh, we used to go to the Boston Symphony, but we only did that a couple of times. And that's because when I was younger I was more involved with classical music, because one of my friends was a violinist. And I used to go with him. He used to play with the Nashua Symphony like. He started when he was ten years old. He was very good. I don't know what he's doing now, but. So that's (--). I don't even, I'm not even involved with classical music, but those were some of the things I did when I was younger. But the point is I never went to Boston when I was young, and they thought that was strange. But I felt, I felt that a lot of French people must have had that same attitude of insularity and staying in this area.

D: I think that that's very true. I mean we went into Boston when I was small only because my aunt was in the hospital at Mass General. And believe it or not, last year I

took my parents into Boston just to take them into Boston. They haven't been since, I mean you're going to laugh, but when Guy Lombardo, or something, was in Boston. [All laugh] That was the last time my father was in Boston. I take him into Boston and it's a typical tourist. I mean, the buildings and everything. And my father was amazed. I mean you know, Boston is thirty-five minutes from the house, but he's never, you know, really been out of Lawrence. I mean he goes to work everyday, and you know, this and that, and that's what he does. I'm taking him into Boston and going to, I once showed them Copley Place you know, these stores. And it just so happened there was some sort of convention going on, on punk rockers or something. [Laughs] My father was, I was getting more enjoyment from watching my father than watching these people, because he, he wasn't in any way saying, "Oh, this is terrible, all these people are strange," or whatever. He was just fascinated, absolutely fascinated by this. And this, this young lady comes up on the side of my father, and my father is waiting there. My mother and I are walking around, and he's, he was tired so he's taking a rest and sits next to my father. And she had a crew cut with a checkerboard hairdo, and it was blue and orange. So we come back and there's my father sitting there, you know, typical all-French-Canadian guy. He's got his cane, and he's got his hat, and he's got his suspenders on and everything, and on the side of him is this young lady. But I wished I had had a camera because my father was just amazing to look at. You know, he was just so fascinated and he actually started to talk with her and ask her what she does. And he was having a great conversation with her. Of course my mother comes along and wants to know, "What are you doing talking to these people?" [Laughing] But it was just amazing, this enlightenment, you know, you take them out of Lawrence and bring them to Boston. They just don't go. I mean they work, come home.

M: Is Boston alien? Is it dangerous? It is, there's nothing interesting or intriguing, or (-- )

D: Well I think for (--) No, I think they find it interesting. I think just in my family, again, where my father works so much, the one day off was Sunday and he frankly needed to rest, you know.

M: Sure. Sure. Sure.

D: And I just, we used to go to the beach a lot as kids, and that was because my uncle had a store there. We never went swimming. Both my parents are afraid of the water, and subsequently so am I. I mean I was taught not to go near the ocean. [Laughs] I love today to walk along the beach, but I very seldom go swimming, you know, at the beach. And we would go to the beach and walk around and get fried clams, and go in the amusements, and that sort of stuff. And go to Canobie Lake, and that was about the extent. I mean we joke, my brothers and I joke now that (--) When we were going to go for a ride on Sunday we always went to the same place, because my father only knew one road. [Laughs] We went to Salem, New Hampshire and picked up, what is it, the Granite State Potato Chips, then we came back home and that was it. You know, but that was like a big thing. We went out for a little ride, you know. And it's almost like you think I'm talking about 75 years ago, but it's not the case. I think that a lot of French

Canadians just are not world travelers. They're very content with being where they are. They don't think about doing anything else. But you know, like every so often I purposely take my parents somewhere just to expose them to something. And they love it, they really enjoy it, but they won't think of doing it on their own.

M: Does this suggest that television doesn't hasn't really widened horizons for these people, or suggest the choices?

D: Oh I think it has. I just think, you know, my parents in many ways just do not have, you know, they're very happy with you know, the family. I mean my father will, you know, I'll try like on a Sunday to say to my father, "Why don't you and Ma go out for a ride?" You know, like get out and do something. "Oh well," you know, "Danny might come over, or George might come over with the kids," you know. And that's what they want, and they enjoy that, and that's fine. They often times take times for themselves. Yet though, when I was growing up Tuesday night was my, my parents went out. That was their night, and my aunt (--)

M: What was the ritual?

D: Well my aunt would come over and babysit us. And we could have tonic that night. I mean this was, you know, [laughs] and if we were very good we could have our sodas, you know, ice cream in the tonic. And my parents would go out and eat, and usually do a little shopping on Tuesday night, go out and eat. And my aunt would usually play monopoly with us, or something like that. And of course I was young at the time and my brothers didn't want to bother to let me play, because I was too young and I would take too long. [Laughs] But that was usually the ritual, you know.

M: Did they go to the same restaurant?

D: Yah, pretty much so. They did the same thing. They went to the same stores to shop.

P: Yup, my parents do the same thing.

D: And went to the same restaurant.

M: Didn't go to the movies? Was this a shopping expedition?

D: No, no, usually shopping expedition, and then to the same restaurant.

M: The night out.

D: The night out, Tuesday nights. [Chuckles]

M: I'm interested in trying to figure out how much of the culture still is alive in terms of customs, either Christmas, or in terms of food, or we've talked about language in a sense of who your are and where you are situated. What about the survival of culture?

P: Well if culture means having the same things, doing the same things year after year, we still do the same things year after year. You know, they'll (--)

M: What are the rituals?

P: They'll always have like tortiere pie, pork pie. And (--)

M: At any particular time?

P: Well mainly at Christmas and at Thanksgiving.

M: Thanksgiving.

P: Yah, and that was, that was the (--)

D: And New Years.

P: Yah, a matter of fact, no one in our family is, like I really don't, like I hate turkey and I can't of too many people who like turkey. Well, but in our family nobody likes turkey that much.

M: Who, who makes the pork pie?

P: Well typically it always happens, not that I agree, but everyone agrees that my great aunt makes the best pork pie. I don't, I don't necessarily think so. Well I do think so. It's kind of like where my tastes are that day. Sometimes (--)

Well see what she does is many people don't actually make pork pies anymore. They make hamburg pies and just season it. And what she does is she uses a certain percentage of pork, and then, then beef. So that's what makes it different. The pork helps to keep it together. Since pork is so fatty (M: Umhm) it tends to make it a nice type, nice type pie. So that, whereas hamburger, if you don't know how to cook it well it will (D: it'll dry) fall apart, yah, and it will become dry. But I know how to solve that it. It's a simple solution. You just cook it. It takes hours to cook over very low, very low heat, and you have to stay with it for hours. That's my solution. So that that way the fat itself doesn't, doesn't like dry up too quickly by being absorbed into the meat as it becomes brown, as it becomes cooked. And so it maintains a very light, light colored, light tan. So that then when you put it into the pot and reheat it, it comes out with a little darker color and it stays together at the same time.

M: What flavors are their other than pork and [unclear].

P: I use sage. That's all I use. Sage, crackers.

D: Cinnamon or oregano.



P: I don't (--)

D: See as, it's funny, as we've gotten older and as my, you know, my father can't digest all of the different spices, my mother has slackened back on the spices (P: Like sage. Sage can be kind of [unclear]) in the corton and the pork pies, but basically it's the same. We usually have a combination of pork and hamburg mixture spread. Add the spices and a little potatoes, and do it that way. But everyone does it differently really, (P: Yah, I guess so) but yet again, it's similar. I think it depends on your palette how you like it seasoned.

M: And is it a Christmas, Thanksgiving dish?

D: Christmas, Thanksgiving and New Years, yah. My mother will make that. And then of course the French beans, the white beans.

M: What makes them French?

D: I think what makes them French are two things. That they're cooked with salt pork, the fattiness, and that you don't add molasses to make them brown. So they're a white bean. And you know, they end up being salty.

P: Huh, I never had French beans. And when I saw French style beans, [unclear]

D: If you go down, down here at Cote's on Salem Street, I mean they have their sign, "Lowell's Famous Beans", and I bought some on Saturday as a matter of fact. And I was doing some research, and I said, "Well while I'm here I've got to buy some of these." And I did, and they taste just like my mother's, you know. And they cooked them the same way, with the salt pork and a little, you know, just a little bit of dry mustard, and you just cook them. And you have to water them down because they're very salty with that salt pork. And you don't put any molasses in, and they're great. You put a little ketchup on and [chuckles].

P: And all of my life I hated baked beans. Now I know what you're talking about baked beans. When you said beans French style, I first thought of green beans.

M: Oh know. [All laugh]

D: No, no, the (--)

P: Oh, my father, he loves that. And he used to bring it home, and that's what we'd have on Saturdays. I never like it. Another thing on Saturdays, we used to eat (--) I don't know, we always, I hear French people do this, they eat the same, typically eat the same foods all the time. They're not like one to experiment.

D: Yah, pretty much blaze [says blaze with accent] in our style.

P: Yah, so weren't we.

D: We're not you know, too elaborate. My mother has become a little bit more elaborate as time has gone on, as she's gone away from the traditional stuff. But (--)

M: What's elaborate?

D: That, more spicy, spicier things. Traditionally we're meat and potatoes, and baked (--)

M: Is that roast, or is that stew, or?

D: Ah, both. Roast beef, pork, a lot of pork, you know, chops, pork butts, bacon, salt port fried, which I could never eat, but my father would eat that. Or minced ham fried, with thick minced ham, and they'd fry that up. A lot of fatty items and high salt, which probably attributes to a lot of heart attacks, but you know, pork and beef, you know, roast beefs, and ham. I mean my grandfather used to raise pigs and you know, smoke his own hams. And that's, so you would have a lot of that; and potatoes, very basic on the vegetables. I mean green beans, or yellow beans, or carrots, peas. I mean when I was growing up I mean once in a great while, of course this could be simply the fact that my father didn't carry too many varieties in the store, you know, that could be simply it. [Laughs] But you know, we often times, I mean brussel sprouts, I mean what is it, you know, or broccoli, cauliflower was not something we had that often. We would have squash. Salmon pie is another traditional thing.

P: Yah, that's right.

D: Salmon pies, which we would have on Fridays during lent.

M: And what about desserts?

D: You know, desserts, my mother makes great apple pie, and you know, puddings. She makes, she's not (--). She doesn't make a lot of pastries like a lot of French Canadian people do, although some of my aunts do. They make wonderful you know, pastries, and you know, rolls, and you know, jams and jellies and pastries, and that. My mother didn't too much. I think she just didn't have time. I mean she had six kids, you know. And but now she'll cook occasionally. And we would often time, you know, for dessert just have more of like a junk food, you know, like a cake or something, you know, for dessert. Desserts were not big in my house.

P: Well one of the typical ones that was, one that I make now was an eggs custard with maple syrup.

D: Umm, yup.

P: And it's served heated, warm.

D: What is the (--)

P: Then there's angel, there's another thing called angel pie. It's not an angel cake, it's an angel pie, and that's make out of just egg whites, fluffing them up, beating them until they're stiff, and then adding the sugar, a cup of sugar like slowly. And when it cooks like a meringue, it has a crust on the top. You use strawberry and whip cream. That's, those both are like Christmas type things that's we'd have.

D: My mother would make occasionally bread pudding.

P: Yah, my mother made bread pudding, but I don't know how.

D: Or a corn bread, or you know, some sort of nut bread, cranberry nut bread occasionally if she had time. But that was, you know, we didn't have anything that I would say was (--) Around the holidays she would tend to make more of these things, you know, for the holidays, but as a regular thing, she just didn't have time. I can't think of anything that's really truly specific, you know.

P: But the idea of definitely the custard and maple syrup is straight. You can go to any restaurant in Canada, Quebec, you'll get that.

D: Yah, Indian Pudding they call it. Indian Pudding, which is a variant on the custard. (P: Oh) I remember going to Salem Willows with my parents, and my father having to have his Indian Pudding, because that's what he had as a kid all the time. So.

M: Any special customs on holidays that are specific to the culture? Gift giving, or rituals about Christmas?

D: I think our customs are more in the food, you know, as opposed to you know, a ritual. Again, you know, in my home it was dictated by my father's business, you know. Christmas Eve he would be very busy. I mean we, we always celebrated Christmas, Christmas Day. (M: Sure) You know, we never opened gifts Christmas Eve, or, and we always had the tradition of Santa Claus coming, but it was still also a very religious day. And we went to church. And you did all of these things. We never were, you know, when I was young my mother did have the advent candles that you lit, you know, each week before Christmas. As we got older though she didn't do that anymore. Um, really, you know, New Years Day is, I think, traditionally a big day for French Canadians. It's celebrated in Canada. And our own Henry Achin from Lowell got that started here. Again, for us in my family, you know, with the store it was a different thing. But my father often talks about New Years Eve and being at the store, and having like people being in the store, because at that time it was tradition. Although the women didn't like it and supposedly the women didn't know this, but of course they did, you would have a little whiskey in the back room at the store, so when the men came shopping they would go in the back.

M: Happy New Year.

D: My father, in the store, of course my father is retired now and in the process of selling the store, we still have a little peek hole from the back room. And as a kid I remember asking my father, "Why is that peek hole there?" You know, and he'd always say, "Oh," you know, make up some story, like that's the gangsters coming or something. [Laugh] It was simply to see if any of the wives were coming into the store to see where the husbands were. They would be in the back room. My mother put a stop to this tradition [Laughing] at the store, really after my grandfather died. She said, "We're not doing this anymore." Then my father stopped it.

M: Why was that? Why was the death of your grandfather the (--)

D: Because it was something that you know, was traditional for my grandfather to do. And he'd be at the store, and he enjoyed his buddies coming in and going in the back room and having a little whiskey, and then going on their way.

M: Would this have been a rural custom?

D: Ah, it may very well have been. I just don't know. I would probably tend to say yes. I mean I know that I've heard stories my father say of my grandfather, on Friday nights after he got his paycheck, he would come home, give my grandmother the money, she would give him a nickel, and then he and the neighbor would go down to the saloon down the road and have a Friday night beer. And that was his, you know, that was his night to be out for a little while. And then he'd come in on Friday a little later. So that you know, I think it was traditional. And we had the lunch pail that you know, they filled the beer up in, so he could take come beer home too, you know, with him to drink.

M: [Unclear]

D: Yah. So I know my father has said that. So I think that that was a traditional thing that was done. I thought it was very nice of my grandmother to do that. [Laughs] But considering you know, a lot of women said no.

M: Are you a religious person? Do you go to church?

D: I would say yes (M: Yes) that I am. I go to church more often than not. I try to go every week. I don't feel I'll be damned to hell if I miss a week. I mean because when it happened first, I had that feeling, but when nothing happened to me I figured it was okay. [Laughs] But you know, you have that feeling driven into you that (--) I had (--) Let me tell you a story. I borrowed a book from Saint Jean Baptiste Church in 1980. I tried to return the book three times, and on three occasions the rectory was closed. And subsequently the priest that I had borrowed it from was no longer at the parish. I had this book the history of church with me for you know, years. I kept forgetting to bring this back, and I kept thinking, oh my gosh, you know, I have this book from this priest. I never returned it, you know. Recently, you know, I kept saying I have to bring this book

back. And the same thing happened to me, I was always doing it at the wrong time. So I called and made an appointment to go back and obviously the secretary forgot I was coming. So I gave the book to, to Paul Marion, because he was going to see Father Morrisette. I said, "Will you please bring this book back for me. I'm feeling like I'm going to go to hell if I don't return this book." And so he laughed, because he understood you know, this feeling. So Paul subsequently brings the book back, and he again, borrowed it from the church. And he keeps saying to me, "I have to bring that book back." And I says, "I understand your feeling." It's just this trauma that's on us from the church, that you have, you know, that you should not do anything against the church.

M: Something will happen.

D: Something will happen to you, you know, you'll be damned to hell. So Paul, it's on his shoulders now. If he doesn't bring that book back he's damned to hell. But it's amazing. Years I had this guilt feeling in my mind of not returning that book, you know, and having that book. Doubled by the fact that it was to a priest, you know.

M: Yes, [unclear]. And are you a regular church goer, or?

P: No, not anymore. I just pretty much stopped. [Unclear\].

M: That's really all of the questions I need.

D: If I just might ask you that I don't feel I am a church goer in a traditional sense that we were taught to be. I go to church and I sit through the mass. It doesn't mean an awful lot to me. I mean it does and it doesn't. You know, half the time I'm thinking about everything else while I'm sitting in church. You know, I'm not paying attention to the mass. My religious feeling comes after the mass when I spend three minutes in the church by myself. And then I leave, and that's my religious experience. So the teaching of the church that you know, participation in the mass, I've sort of lost that. I mean I see no reason for it, because I think that a lot of the priest today just aren't with it in the Catholic church in many ways. I just don't find them to be with, or understanding of society. They're still in many ways, you know, archaic, or just not you know, they're not attracting young people to come to church. They're turning you off. So I go to church because it's convenient at a time, it's a convenient time to go if there's a mass, because the church is open. And so that's my religious (--) And so in some ways I've lost that sense of the tradition of religion, but yet I consider myself a religious person.

M: That's no longer a communal experience for you. It's an individual experience.

D: Exactly.

M: That's a very interesting [unclear].

**End of interview.**